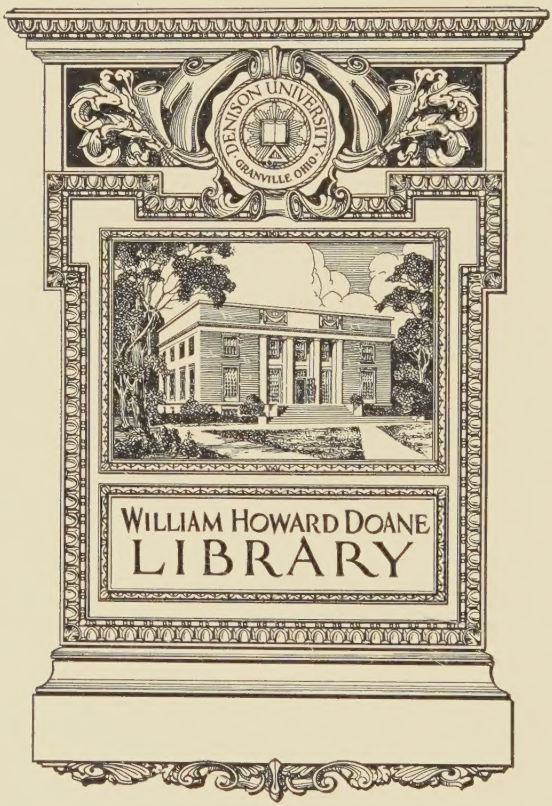
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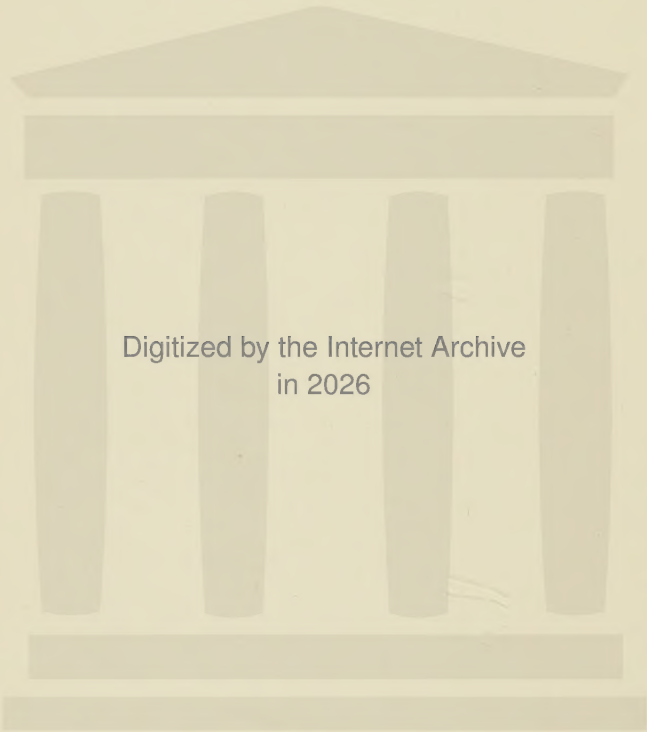

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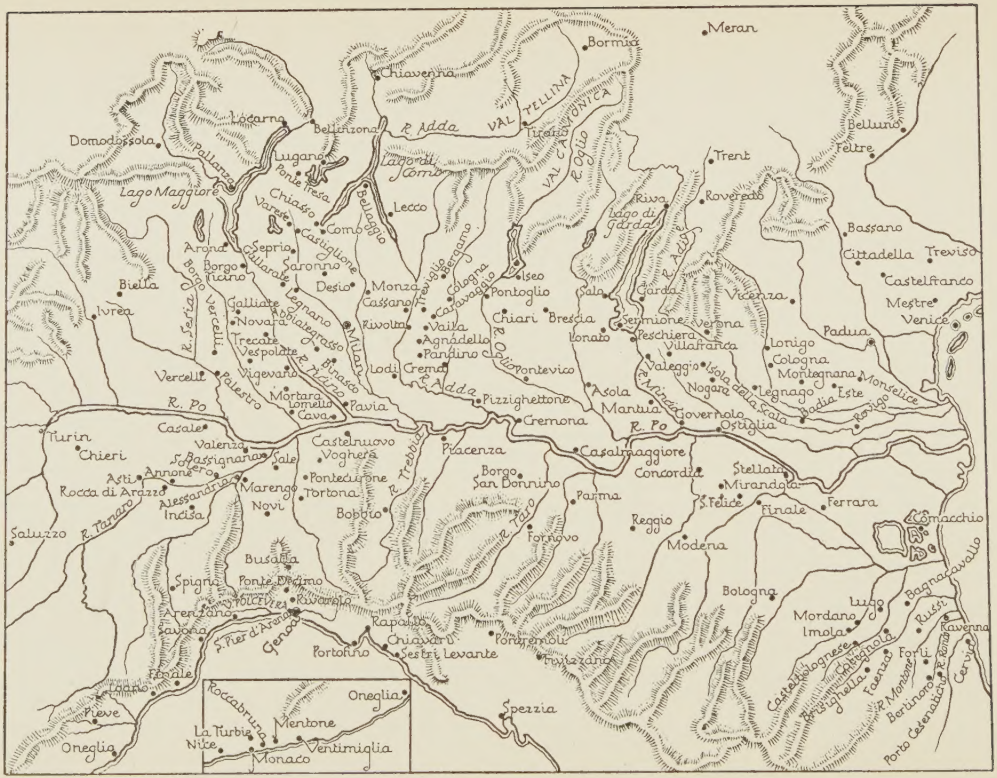
A HISTORY OF FRANCE

VOL. IV

REIGN OF LOUIS XII

1508–1514



NORTHERN ITALY

A

HISTORY OF

FRANCE

FROM THE DEATH OF

LOUIS XI

BY

JOHN S. C. BRIDGE

VOLUME IV

REIGN OF LOUIS XII

1508–1514

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XXII

THE LEAGUE OF CAMBRAY

SUMMING up the characteristics of the period with which his work had made him familiar, the editor of the Venetian State Papers was led to remark upon the manner in which, 'at the close of the fifteenth century, and the beginning of the sixteenth, the continual agitations and aggressions with which the great continental powers were endeavouring to extend or consolidate their dominions, brought about the closest intercourse between the different members of the European family. Leagues of spoliation and partition, leagues of guarantee and protection, of attack and defence, succeeded each other with endless variety of combination. The balance of power was recognized as the leading principle of the statesman's policy; and how to enforce it in the case of his neighbour and to elude it in his own became, as it has been ever since, the prime object of his ambition, which called into action all the resources of his genius and all the arts of diplomacy. At the League of Cambray . . . the intrigues and artifices of diplomatic treachery sprang into a rank luxuriance of perfection which has never since been surpassed.'[1]

This famous—or infamous—League was directed against the Republic of Venice, and was inspired, not only by the jealousy with which that ambitious and acquisitive power was everywhere regarded, but also by the prevailing lust for territorial gains, which no sense of decency fettered, nor any respect for treaty obligations operated to restrain. The conception of such a league was no new thing, for it had haunted the minds of statesmen since the earliest years of the century, and had taken definite shape in the secret treaty of Blois of September 1504. Accident alone had deprived that treaty of practical effect, and the development which one accident had frustrated another might facilitate. If the resuscitation of the idea of an alliance against Venice were really the project discussed in the secret conferences at Savona, then Louis and Ferdinand were well served by events. The chief

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, ed. Rawdon Brown, p. viii.

impediment to a general league against Venice was the estrangement of Maximilian from Louis and Ferdinand, and the events of the year 1508, by arousing in the mind of the Emperor a resentment against Venice more intense than his smouldering dislike of the Savona conspirators, rendered possible the strange transformation scene which was exhibited at Cambray.

When the year opened, the Emperor had made up his mind to go into Italy, assume the Imperial Crown, reassert the Imperial authority, and, as was conjectured, resume possession of the great Imperial fief which Louis had illegally occupied. Deterred by chronic impecuniosity from enlisting Swiss warriors, Maximilian had appealed to the Diet of Constance to be furnished with the sinews of war, and the Diet had consented to grant help, though not of a nature which could be deemed adequate in view of the certainty of French, and the probability of Venetian, opposition. Louis, as the Florentine envoy at his Court reported, was far from being pleased that the Emperor should go to Italy, and meant to put every possible obstacle in his way; and d'Amboise, who asserted that the Emperor's object would be, not merely to get crowned, but to go robbing and plundering and causing all manner of changes in the peninsula, declared that it would be out of the question that the French should suffer such things to be done to their confederates.[1] Compelled by their position to choose between the rival sovereigns, the Venetians decided to support the French, with whom they were allied, who were already established in Italy, and who made 'great offers and promises' to the Venetian ambassador for transmission to his Signory. Upon these promises the Signory placed reliance, despite the warning note which ambassadorial caution sounded in the advice to 'pay heed to your affairs, for these Frenchmen often make fair words a prelude to ill deeds, and they keep their promises so far only as it happens to suit them'.[2] Urged on by the French, the Signory intimated to Maximilian that he would not be permitted to enter their dominions, should he bring an army with him. Maximilian's answer was

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 158–60.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

to take the title of 'Emperor elect' and to enter Venetian territory with his troops at his back. Aided by the French, the Venetians everywhere got the better of the Imperial forces, and in June 1508, after Friuli and Istria had been invaded and Fiume and Trieste occupied, the Emperor was driven to submit to a three years' truce, by which he abandoned to the Republic nearly all the spoils of its victorious arms.

This success was the occasion of the Signory's misfortunes. Against the policy of spoliation adumbrated in the treaty of Blois they had hitherto found a safeguard in the jealousies and quarrels which had kept their enemies apart, and of that safeguard the ill-omened truce deprived them. Smarting under recent defeat, the Emperor grew ready to forget his old grievances against France and to listen to the solicitations of the Pope, who showed him the way to avenge an unforgivable affront. Scarcely less intense than the displeasure of the Emperor was the irritation of Louis XII, when he found that the Venetians had made a truce without consulting his interests and in particular without requiring the inclusion of the Duke of Guelders, whom he had been supporting against the Emperor. When the Venetian ambassador went to the King, and told him that a truce had been concluded, Louis exploded in a torrent of abuse; nor did this outburst exhaust his wrath, which continued to vent itself in querulous or acrimonious comment upon several subsequent occasions. Describing one such interview, the ambassador reported that the King had complained bitterly that the Signory should have concluded the truce so quickly, seeing that there was no pressure upon them to do so, and that he did not deserve to be so treated. He would not accept it, because it would cost him 200,000 ducats, and because he meant to support his feudatory, the Duke of Guelders. The King and the ambassador were by themselves during the interview, and what with grief and rage His Majesty was on the brink of tears. Contrary to the general expectation, the Cardinal of Rouen, when he returned to the Court, received the ambassador well, but drew him aside to complain that the Signory had done ill to conclude the truce so quickly and had treated the King scurvily.[1] Coming

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, cols. 554, 558.

on top of existing grievances—of the dubious character of Venetian neutrality during the war in Naples, of her aggressions in Romagna, of her pretensions on the Milanese frontiers, of her suspect behaviour during the Genoese revolt —the truce could not but do Venice a grave disservice in the mind of the King. Even if he were staunch to the alliance, it might cause him to waver; if he were wavering, it must decide him; and if, having made up his mind at Savona, he was merely waiting for a pretext, then here was a pretext ready to his hand.

The attitude of King Ferdinand becomes intelligible enough, when we remember that by means of a league against Venice he might hope to avoid a considerable peril and to compass a not inconsiderable gain. The peril was the risk of his own political isolation, for he had turned the French out of Naples, deprived the Austrians of the government of Castile, come to loggerheads with the Pope, and even in his friendly relations with the English failed to make a dependable ally; and though this peril had been removed in part by the policy which had estranged France from Austria and won for himself the hand of Germaine de Foix, yet his security would become more absolute, were he to be admitted to full partnership in a general league of the powers. The gain was the recovery of the Neapolitan harbours, and, so long as those harbours should be detained by the Venetians, he must feel that his new crown was robbed of its most precious ornaments. That Ferdinand, long before he met Louis at Savona, was busy with schemes for recovering the mortgaged sea-ports, was revealed by the answer which his envoy made to Pandolfini, when the Florentine spoke of the importance of those places and of the pressure likely to be required to bring about their restitution. 'Those places', said the Spanish agent, 'were pledged, and not sold. My master is always fair in his dealings, and he is satisfied that it is better worth the Venetians' while to content him than to keep those places. . . . I believe that he has already given them to understand something of that sort; and in any case you may rest assured that he means to get the places back somehow or other, for his mind is full of it.'[1] Nothing

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 198–9.

could be more to Ferdinand's taste than a plan by which the Emperor, the Pope, and the King of France would bear the brunt of a rupture with the Venetians, whilst he himself, safe from danger and free from expense, would take possession of the mortgaged sea-ports without paying off the mortgagees.

The Pope in the years 1507 and 1508 was no better pleased with the Venetians than when we took leave of him after the Bologna expedition. Flushed with their victory over the Emperor, the Signory had dealt with Julius as imprudently as with Louis, going out of their way to stir up trouble in Bologna, offering an asylum to the fugitive Bentivogli, and ignoring the Pope's demands that those refugees should be given up as rebels against the Church. Nor was it only in secular affairs that the proud Republic had defied the Pope's authority. In the spiritual sphere Venice was wont to carry matters with a high hand, citing churchmen before her courts, forbidding appeals to Rome, and appointing to bishoprics and benefices without reference to the Pope's wishes. A violent quarrel over the Bishopric of Cremona in 1505 was succeeded in 1507 by another and no less acrimonious dispute over the Bishopric of Vicenza, of which the nominee of the Senate took forcible possession. Venice merited the censure which one of her subjects passed upon her, when he condemned the pride for which the Venetians were hated, and declared that 'this pride is indeed excessive in many of them, who confide in a wealth swelled to vast proportions by their command of the sea and their possession of many cities. Thus for many years past they have refused due obedience to the Church, not suffering that any subject of theirs should without their consent be cited before the Rota in Rome in any cause ecclesiastical or civil; and if any foreigner wishes to execute a sentence of the Rota, they make the greatest difficulties in giving him the use of the secular arm, caring nothing at all for excommunications or interdicts. Further, they insist upon appointing their own nominees to all vacant benefices in their dominions, even though an appointment be actually made by the Pope, and they take every care to reserve such benefices for their countrymen. Thus it happens that in this and in other respects the Pope is not really Pope, so far as they are

concerned. The story of the strong language which their ambassador, Pisani, used to His Holiness, Pope Julius, is well known. The Pope desired that possession of certain benefices in Venetian territory should be given to one upon whom he had conferred them. The Venetians refused, demanding that the benefices should be conferred upon certain of their gentlemen. High words passed: the Pope threatened to act in such a manner that they would perceive how great had been their error in thus rashly usurping his jurisdiction; Pisani imprudently retorted that, if such were his desire, he would do well to obtain control of larger forces than were then at his disposal. Incensed beyond measure, His Holiness exclaimed: "I will not rest till I have made you as humble as the fishermen which once you were": whereupon the ambassador replied: "Far more easily, Holy Father, might we make a poor little parish priest of you." Coming on top of much else, this had a great effect in turning Pope Julius into an enemy of the Venetians.'[1]

In the summer of 1507 Cardinal Bernardino Carvajal, who was known to be one of the Emperor's staunchest adherents in the Roman Court, had been sent by Julius to Germany in the capacity of Legate. His instructions were to dissuade Maximilian from coming to Italy by offering the alternative of a coronation in Germany; and he was also to propose a general league against the Turk, and to explore the possibilities of a special league against Venice. The Emperor was won over to the Pope's views by his humiliating experiences in the war with Venice, and in 1508 secret overtures were made to the French Government for an offensive and defensive alliance against the Republic.[2] On 21st October it became known to the Signory's representative in France that a truce for a month between Maximilian on the one side and the King of France and the Duke of Guelders on the other had been arranged by Madame Margaret, the Regent of the Netherlands; that during that time a peace was to be negotiated; and that the Cardinal of Rouen was to have an interview with Margaret at Cambray. How little the ambassador at first suspected the real object of the interview was shown by the confident tone of subsequent

[1] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 29–30.

[2] Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 295–6.

dispatches, in which he reported that Louis was well disposed towards the Signory, and that Venice would be included in any arrangement that might be made.[1]

The little principality of Guelders, which was to furnish the pretext for the momentous interview now impending, enjoyed a prominence in contemporary politics out of all proportion to its intrinsic importance, and the diplomats could no more keep it out of their correspondence than Mr. Dick could purge his Memorial of the subject associated in his mind with the idea of disturbance and agitation. Charles of Egmont, Duke of Guelders, who had been captured by the French at Béthune in 1487, had been set at liberty again in 1491, and since then had been used recurrently as a thorn in Austrian flesh. To the people of Guelders he was equally dear as the descendant of their ancient princes and as the champion of their national independence, and 'he had only to show himself in Guelders to provoke a rising against Burgundian rule'.[2] So long as France had stood behind the little Duchy, the Archduke Philip had not cared to risk a conflict, but he had begun to enforce his claims as soon as the Blois treaties had deprived Egmont of French protection, and the Duke had been reduced to an extremity of peril, when Louis, going over from the Austrian to the Spanish side, had come back to the rescue of his former *protégé*. The Guelders war, which broke out again after the Archduke's death; the election at Liège of a La Marck Bishop favourable to the French; the activities of the Bishop's brother, the Seigneur de Sedan, who began hostilities on the Luxemburg frontier; recurrent threats of French intervention; mutiny in Ghent; sedition in Arras; discontent everywhere—these things formed the legacy of accumulated troubles to which Margaret of Austria succeeded, when she took over the government of the Netherlands as Regent for her dead brother's heir. For all, or nearly all, of these troubles a remedy was offered by the policy to which Maximilian had become a convert, and, however bitter her own animosity against the French, she could not hesitate, when her father asked her to act as his representative in the conferences which were to bring that

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, cols. 656, 663.
[2] Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, vol. iii, p. 63.

policy to fruition.[1] Louis, when informed that she was to act for the Emperor, wrote her a friendly little note, in which he told her that he had heard with delight of her pacific inclination: it would be awkward, he said, to part with d'Amboise, seeing that he was entrusted with the conduct of important affairs; but all the same the Cardinal should soon leave for the Picardy marches, and should be furnished with full powers to effect an amicable settlement.[2]

The remarkable young woman to whom this overture was addressed was now in her twenty-eighth year. It was she whom Charles had jilted, when his sister's arts and arms had offered him the hand of the heiress of Brittany, and seldom in the intervening years had the memory of that humiliation been absent from her thoughts. It was not that she had suffered the fate of some jilted maidens, condemned by one misfortune to the chill prospect of perpetual spinsterhood, for she had since been married twice, once to a son of the Catholic sovereigns, and once for three happy years to Philibert of Savoy; and it was by her own choice that she had not after Philibert's death mounted the throne of England as the consort of Henry VII. The crime which the French had committed was to humiliate her in the eyes of all the world, and the sting of that humiliation lay, not so much in wounded female vanity, as in the fact that the insult had been received in meek submission by the proud House which was outraged in her person. Louis XII had no more formidable antagonist than this clever, capable, and resolute girl. As an eminent historian has said of her, 'she was to show herself one of those great Princesses who were so numerous in the sixteenth century, doubtless because the feminine qualities of suppleness, finesse, and cleverness were peculiarly suited to the wholly personal politics of the epoch. Disillusioned but not discouraged by her misfortunes, she gave herself entirely to the task of imposing on Europe the preponderance of her House. To this she devoted herself heart and soul. Impelled alike by her affection for her nephew and by her resentment against the French, she threw herself with feminine ardour into the

[1] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–71, 74–6.
[2] *Lettres de Louis XII*, vol. i, pp. 120–2.

struggle which had begun between the Hapsburgs and the Valois.'[1]

The town of Cambray on the frontier of Flanders was at this time the capital of a small district under the jurisdiction of a Bishop. Hither in November 1508 came Margaret, plenipotentiary for the Emperor and for the Archduke Charles, and Georges d'Amboise, invested with power to treat for France. Each was accompanied by a large and distinguished train. The Regent brought with her Matthew Lang, Bishop of Gurk, Mercurino Gattinara, President of the Parlement of Burgundy, and Jean Caulier, President of the Council. The Cardinal would be assisted and advised by Étienne Poncher, Bishop of Paris, and Alberto Pio, Count of Carpi, two prominent members of King Louis' Council. A Papal Nuncio and the envoys of England and of Aragon also went to Cambray, though none of the three had any special mission. From the outset negotiations were carried on in private between the Princess and the Cardinal. Though no other persons were admitted to the more important of their conferences, it became known outside that the thorny problem of Guelders was provoking lively discussions. In the end it was not upon that delicate matter that the negotiations threatened to break down, but, surprisingly enough, upon the seemingly trivial question of the inclusion in the proposed treaty of Jean d'Albret, King of Navarre. The claim of this sovereign to the Navarrese throne was disputed by a pretender; the pretender was Gaston de Foix, a nephew of Louis XII; and Louis could not recognize d'Albret without an implied repudiation of his nephew's claims. Suddenly, therefore, when, as Margaret supposed, everything had been satisfactorily arranged with the Legate, d'Amboise announced that he could not sign any treaty in which d'Albret was included, since his exclusion had been imperatively required by Louis XII in instructions under his own hand. Margaret was both angry and suspicious—angry, in that the inclusion of d'Albret had been accepted in principle by d'Amboise; suspicious, in that d'Amboise was now taking shelter behind an alleged lack of authority in himself, when he had previously posed as a person invested with plenary powers. Specifically instructed to procure the inclusion of

[1] Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, vol. iii, p. 72.

d'Albret, and satisfied in her own mind that his omission would be inconsistent with the Imperial honour, she told the Legate quite firmly that she would throw everything up sooner than give way; she liked it not, she said, that a bargain so near conclusion should be broken off upon so small a pretext, or that her time should be wasted in chicanery and deceit; and therefore she had resolved to break off the negotiations and take her departure at the first opportunity. The Legate earnestly begged that she would at least give him time to communicate once again with his master; and to this Margaret agreed, fearing lest an appearance of precipitate action on her part should bring upon her the discredit of a rupture.[1]

The threat of a rupture brought Louis to book, for Navarre was a side issue, and he had too much at stake in the negotiations to imperil their success by an untimely exigency. Margaret remained at Cambray; the discussions continued; and at last a bargain was struck. On 10th December a treaty between the Emperor and Charles of Austria, of the one part, and the King of France and Charles of Guelders, of the other part, was signed by Margaret and Georges d'Amboise, and thereafter was solemnly published in Cambray Cathedral. The treaty established a good, true, and loyal peace, union, and alliance, to endure during the joint lives of the Emperor and the King of France and for one year thereafter. It provided for a special confederation against the Turks and other infidel enemies of Christendom, and in this confederation were to be included the subjects, vassals, friends, and confederates of the contracting powers, and particularly the Pope and the Kings of England, of Hungary, and of Aragon. The Navarre question was to be held in suspense for a year with a view to its amicable settlement by the Emperor and the King of France, and during that time no disturbance of the actual possessor was to be attempted by King Louis or his nephew, Gaston. The dispute about Guelders was disposed of by a clause providing for the admission of Charles of Egmont to the League on condition of his surrendering certain specified places and submitting his claims to arbitra-

[1] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. lxxxix–xc, and *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite*, vol. i, p. 109; *Lettres de Louis XII*, pp. 133–5.

tion. It was stipulated that the Archduke should remain in peaceable possession of the lands held of the French Crown; that he should not be required to do homage for them until he should have attained the age of twenty; and that there should be an inquiry into the misdeeds alleged to have been committed by French officials in Flanders and Artois after the death of Philip of Castile, Louis undertaking to provide a remedy for any proved abuses. In consideration of the sum of 100,000 *écus* the Emperor would give to the King of France an investiture of Milan for himself and his heirs male, and, in default, for Claude and her issue or other the daughter or daughters of the King. The Emperor also gave up his rights in respect of the marriage formerly arranged between Madame Claude and Prince Charles, and waived all penalties enforceable under previous treaties for the infraction of that contract.[1]

So much the world was permitted to know, and so much only, thus being left in ignorance of the real basis of the bargain struck at Cambray. The agreement which had brought jealous rivals together in the bonds of a new and strange friendship was embodied in another and a secret treaty signed on the same day. This treaty provided for a general league against Venice, 'to put a term to the losses, injuries, spoliations, and damage inflicted by the Venetians, not only on the Holy Apostolic See, but also on the Holy Roman Empire, the House of Austria, the Dukes of Milan, the Kings of Naples, and many other Princes, whose goods and chattels, cities and castles, they have nefariously usurped, as though pledged to do injury to all the world. . . . Therefore have we deemed it, not merely useful and honourable, but imperatively necessary to summon all to a just revenge, that all may unite, as in the presence of a conflagration by which all are threatened, to extinguish the insatiable Venetian cupidity and thirst for dominion.' To give effect to the laudable and necessary purpose thus proclaimed, a special league was formed between the Pope, for whom the Cardinal Legate answered, the Emperor, the King of France, and the King of Aragon, the business of the league being a partition

[1] Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, pp. 111–13; Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 225–36.

of the Venetian dominions under the guise of legitimate revendication. The Pope was to have Ravenna, Cervia, Faenza, Rimini, Imola, and Cesena. To the Emperor would go Roveredo, Verona, Padua, Vicenza, Treviso, Friuli, Istria, and all else taken by the Venetians from the Empire or the House of Austria. The King of France was to 'recover', as he called it, that which he had ceded voluntarily to Venice as the price of her co-operation in the conquest of Milan, thus obtaining the Ghiara d'Adda, Cremona, Brescia, Crema, and Bergamo. The King of Aragon would be given Brindisi, Trani, Gallipoli, and Otranto, the towns upon the security of which Venice had financed his predecessor in title; and his complicity was further assured by a stipulation that the Austrian Princes should not during the war take any action in respect of their claim to the government of Castile. The King of Hungary was to be pressed to enter the alliance, and, if he were to consent, was to receive Dalmatia. Cyprus was dangled as a lure before the eyes of the Duke of Savoy; and other spoils were reserved for the rulers of Ferrara and Mantua. The sooner to achieve the results in view, each confederate would hold himself in readiness to act on the first day of April next ensuing with forces sufficient to effect the recovery of his stipulated share, and, that done, would go to the aid of such of his allies as had not then accomplished their purpose. Not only would each give help to the others during the war, but also none would make a separate peace. The Pope would proceed by ecclesiastical censures and interdicts against Venice, her Doge, magistracy, people, subject territories, and adherents, summoning the allies to his aid, and handing over to them the possessions of Venice as spoil. The difficulty of the Emperor's recent engagement to Venice, which he could not honourably break without a cause, was overcome by a casuistical device in keeping with the spirit of the compact in which it was included: it was arranged that the Pope should call upon Maximilian, as Protector of the Church, to aid with all his forces in the recovery of the Church's property, and he was to be required to break with the Venetians within a specified time expiring forty days after the day appointed for action by the other belligerents. In regard to the investiture of Milan, promised to Louis XII by the treaty of even date, it was stipulated

that it should be given as soon as the Most Christian King should effectually have invaded Venetian territory, and, further, that it should expressly include Brescia, Crema, Cremona, and the territories assigned to him by the secret treaty. Finally, liberty was reserved for the King of England to adhere.[1]

Historians have dealt severely with this treaty; almost without exception they have denounced it as a supreme instance of the political crime which is doubly criminal, because it is a blunder as well.[2] Some have been scandalized by the spectacle of the powers combining without provocation for international robbery, permitting no feeling of honour to stand in the way, callously denying the claims of binding treaties, and brutally asserting self-seeking in its ugly nakedness as the principle by which the newly formed nations of Europe were to guide their course. Others have been more conscious of the impolicy of the bargain than of its impiety, and have maintained that, whatever the prospects of the other conspirators, Julius and Louis at any rate stood to gain no advantage which could counterbalance the danger inherent for each of them in the success of his confederates. For the inadequate object of an increase in the temporal power, Julius, whose professed end was the expulsion of the barbarians from Italy, called them in to destroy the State which was the last bulwark of Italian independence. For the no less inadequate object of some additions to the Milanese, Louis inflicted on his country a triple injury in breaking with the Venetians, healing the breach between Maximilian and Ferdinand, and bearing the brunt of a contest by which others were to be the chief gainers. There is force in these contentions, but there are other considerations which should not be overlooked. The object which the Pope had in view was not so much the acquisition of a few towns in Romagna

[1] Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, pp. 113–15; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 188–9; Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 207–8.

[2] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, vol. iv, pp. 100–1; Reumont, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom*, vol. iii, part ii, pp. 26–7; Gregorovius, *History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, Eng. trans., vol. viii, part i, pp. 59–60; *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. ii, pp. x–xi; Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, p. lxxxviii; Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, vol. v, part i, p. 86. An exception is provided by Brewer, *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xxi.

as the enfeeblement of the powerful neighbour who shut him out from the hope of temporal prosperity; and his policy, if seemingly narrow and selfish, was honestly believed by himself to be essential in the interest of his more impersonal and patriotic ends. A justification of the attitude of Louis has been put forward in the argument that, since he offered to Maximilian only such spoils as would never be gathered by the desultory efforts of that ineffective blusterer, the substantial benefits of the arrangement were sure to be reaped by France. This defence would be more convincing, if it were true that the interests of France were identical with those of Milan. The least commendable feature of Louis' policy at Cambray is that it was not primarily for the benefit of France that he entered into the bargain there concluded. Its most disastrous consequence was its effect upon the Swiss. Already estranged by the Genoa expedition, the Confederacy found itself omitted from the League, and began to tremble for Bellinzona. The breach came when the victorious King decided to throw off the rapacious partners, who had dragged his economy a mutilated victim at the wheels of their mercenary chariot; and the prime factor in the ultimate ruin of Louis' Italian plans was not the breach with Venice, nor the aggrandizement of Maximilian, nor the strength of the Papacy, nor the prosperity of Ferdinand, but the hostility of the Swiss.

In justice to Louis it should, perhaps, be added that the Cambray policy would seem to have commended itself wholly to the anti-Venetian feeling of his subjects, who saw nothing to criticize, unless it were the stipulation that the French should launch their attack six weeks in advance of their chief confederate. 'I do not know', wrote Bayard's biographer, 'the reason for this stipulation, unless it were by way of precaution, so that, if the King of France had got the worst of it, they might, perhaps, have turned on him instead of attacking the Venetians; for there was never much love lost between France and Austria; nor did King Louis and the Pope hit it off very well. In a word, their idea, as it seems to me, was to make the French try the run of the luck, whilst they themselves were to gamble on the schoolboy principle of "Heads I win, tails you lose".'[1]

[1] 'Bref, il me semble, à dire le vray, qu'ilz vouloient faire essayer la fortune

Despite all precautions for keeping her in ignorance, Venice soon got an inkling of the fate which was intended for her. On December 13th the Captain of Cremona warned the Signory of rumours current in Trent that the object of the Cambray meeting was the formation of a league against the Republic; and about the same time the Venetian agent in Milan was informed that the powers had agreed that none should nominate the Republic as an ally.[1] The Signory were already suspicious on their own account, because they knew that such meetings as that at Cambray were not arranged for the sole purpose of discussing such matters as Guelders and Navarre. Being suspicious, they told their ambassador in France to demand explanations. He applied first to Robertet, who told him that an arrangement had been come to and peace was made. Pressed to explain how and with whom and on what terms, the Secretary answered evasively: 'We shall soon know; all will be well for the Signory,' and would say no more. So on the morrow, when the King had gone to a village ten miles away to hunt, the ambassador rode after him, to get from him the information which his officials refused. Setting out from Blois betimes, he reached the place at the hour of Mass. The King observed him, and sent word to him to remain, saying that he intended to dine there and would then speak with him. So the ambassador stayed, dined with some of the Court officials, and afterwards waited upon the King. Louis told him that an agreement had been reached at Cambray, and that it contained nothing disadvantageous to the Signory; he gave no particulars, however, merely saying that the agreement would do no one any harm, and that he meant to maintain his alliance with Venice. He added that the Venetian truce was going to cost him a pretty penny, because, although he was to have the investiture of Milan, he had got to pay for it, and it was to cost him 200,000 ducats. With these uninforming observations he brought the interview to an end; and whenever on subsequent occasions the ambassador recurred to the subject,

aux François, et vouloient jouer à ung jeu que jouent petis enfans à l'escolle: S'il est bon je le prens; et s'il est mauvais je le laisse': *La très joyeuse . . . histoire du gentil Seigneur de Bayart*, composée par le Loyal Serviteur, ed. J. Roman, p. 138.

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, cols. 693, 705.

the King put him off by saying that he must 'wait for the Cardinal of Rouen's return.'[1]

At last the Cardinal returned, and the ambassador, importunate in his anxiety, rode out to meet him. D'Amboise greeted him cordially, but there was no opportunity for private talk. That evening came dispatches from Venice, repeating the demand for explanations, and next morning the ambassador went once more to the King, to execute his commission. The King, as usual, changed the subject as quickly as he could, and talked of other things. More than ever determined to be shown the terms of the treaty, the importunate diplomat then went to d'Amboise and asked for information. The Cardinal replied that in the arrangements made at Cambray they had done well against the Turk. 'And what', asked the ambassador, 'are the terms of the treaty?' 'Mr. Ambassador,' said the Cardinal, 'you do well to ask. I will speak with the King about the matter, and then will show you.' Two days later the ambassador came back again, to obtain fulfilment of this promise, when the Cardinal put him off by saying that, although he had seen the King, they had talked of other matters. Nothing daunted, the ambassador presently inquired yet again. D'Amboise replied: 'You wish to see the articles? That is but fair'; and, calling his secretary, he told him to bring the treaty. The secretary objected that they had no authority from the King, to whom something ought first to be said; and the Cardinal, assenting, began at once to talk of something else. The acute Italian could read pretty clearly the riddle of all this subterfuge and dissimulation. 'In a word,' he wrote in concluding his dispatch, 'I can neither inspect the treaty, nor get any information about it, but am always being put off with the remark that there is no hurry, and then the conversation is turned into another channel. I infer that it is an unsatisfactory business; indeed, I have it on good authority that the treaty is actually directed against us.'[2]

This was disquieting news for the Signory, and hard on its heels came intelligence yet more alarming from Spain, where Gonsalvo de Cordova arranged to meet the Signory's representative in an out-of-the-way church, and, after abus-

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, cols. 695–6.
[2] *Ibid.*, col. 720.

ing his master for his shabby treatment of him, revealed the secret of the Cambray treaty.[1] Before the end of January 1509 it was known on the Lagoons that Maximilian had asked the Diet for a subvention in aid of a national war, and that great military activity prevailed in France, where the Venetian ambassador was in very bad odour and had been threatened with dismissal. On 28th January Louis' representative appeared before the College, and announced that his master had recalled him, news which quickly got about and caused a great stir, since none could any longer doubt that Venice would soon be at war with France.[2] Even then, however, the magnitude of the peril which threatened the Republic was not clearly apprehended by its statesmen, who persisted in doubting whether its enemies were sincere, and in believing that, even if sincere, they would be precluded by diversity of purpose from attaining an effective unity. They knew that the Emperor had no money, the Pope no men, and the King of Aragon no zeal. They knew that two of them at the least were very suspicious of the French, to whom they attributed sinister and treacherous designs. They knew that Julius did not want to bring the Germans into Italy or to help the French to stay there, and, as he had not yet formally signified his concurrence, they thought that he must intend to disavow d'Amboise and refuse his adherence.[3] Probably they were right in their supposition that it might be possible to buy Julius off, in fact, if not in appearance; but the price would have been high, and before Venice had made a bid, Julius had proclaimed his adherence, and then her offers were too late.

The Republic was no more fortunate in its efforts to gain the support of the English, who might be expected to be favourably inclined towards it, not only on general political grounds, but also because they had received scant consideration from the confederate powers. English envoys had been present at Cambray, but they had not been let into the secret of the Italian treaty,[4] which closed the door of the

1 Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, p. 193.

2 Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, cols. 724–5.

3 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 307–8; Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite*, vol. i, pp. 113–14.

4 See, however, Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite*, vol. i, p. 100.

Continent in the face of their country. England had no interest in the destruction of Venice, and could take no pleasure in the aggrandizement of France. A fervent appeal was made to her from the Lagoons. She was warned that nothing less was in contemplation than the ruin of Italy and the transfer of the two swords, the spiritual and the temporal, to the hands of the Cardinal of Rouen and his master, a thing unprecedented, indeed, but by no means impossible of achievement, if the elect of God among the Princes of Christendom were to stand idly by. Let the King of England ponder the detestable greediness of the French, their shameful treachery, their base ingratitude; and then let him ask himself whether he ought not to intercede for Venice, and make peace for her with the Emperor, who by no law, human or divine, was required to keep faith with those by whom he had so often been betrayed. Would he not caution the King of France? Would he not make his opinion known to the Pope?[1] The appeal fell upon deaf ears, for Henry VII was a dying man; and it was in vain, too, that Venice herself made overtures to Maximilian, trying to buy him off with an offer of 200,000 guilders for the purpose of recovering the Milanese.

Venice suffered yet another rebuff when she attempted to purchase the mercenary sword of the Marquis of Mantua. That attempt was hopeless from the first. The pride of Gonzaga had been wounded by the Signory's treatment of him; his security was threatened by Venetian ambition; and his interest demanded that he should adhere to the League. Venice dwelt upon the peril to Italy, and appealed to the patriotism of Italy's leading *condottiere*; but Gonzaga thought more of the issue of the coming conflict than of its effect upon his country, and his principle, as the grooms in his famous stable might have defined it, was to refuse a mount on an outsider when he could go to the post in the colours of the favourite. The story of his rejection of the Venetian overtures may best be told in the words in which, on 22nd March 1509, he himself narrated it to his agent in Milan.

'A thing has happened to-day, which greatly disturbed me at first, but from which I have since derived a pleasure

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. i, pp. 334–7.

as lively as any that ever I felt. Brother Anselm sent me word from his monastery that a man had arrived there in disguise, who seemed to be a person of condition, and who earnestly requested that he might have speech with me about matters of supreme importance. So I went to the monastery, and found there Carlo Valerio, who openly avowed that he had been sent by the Signory. Such was my annoyance at his effrontery and presumption that my inclination was to give him short shrift; but he implored me instantly to hear him, and entered straightway upon his tale. I ought, he said, to consider myself the luckiest man of my time, for I had in my hands the fate of the Signory, who therefore begged that I would enter their service upon my own terms. After excusing the past conduct of Venice by representing that it had been inspired by consideration for me, he passed on to an offer of a *condotta* with a salary of 60,000 *scudi* and provision for my wife, children, and retainers. I told him shortly that the offer was one which I could not entertain, for I had been waiting for such an occasion as had now arisen to serve my patron, the King of France, and there were no means by which I could be tempted away from his service.

'To this he rejoined that Venice had taken it very ill that I should have chosen the King as my patron, and hoped that I might take warning from her own case of the danger of trusting the foreigner. This statement I traversed, maintaining that the good faith of the King was unequalled, declaring that it was rather he who had suffered by the perfidy of others, and arguing that, had opportune treachery been his aim, he need not have waited so long for a chance. Valerio went on to say that, since it was now a question, not of diminishing Venetian power, but of blotting out the very name of Italy, it behoved me to ponder my own position. I asked him how it might be possible to ward off the terrible disaster he predicted. He confessed that the Signory placed their hopes, neither in the Pope, nor in Germany, nor in Spain, but solely in me. They were ready to raise my salary to 80,000 ducats, give me the rank of Captain-General, and place under my orders their generals, the Count of Pitigliano and Bartolommeo d'Alviano, who had urged my engagement, and were willing to serve under me. The intention was to invade the Milanese, in which there were districts favourable

to them; they would do this, not with a view to attempting a permanent conquest, because the country would be restive in subjection, but for the purpose of proclaiming the creation of an independent Duke, when the people of Milan in their hatred of the French would rise as one man; and the title of Duke they would give to me. Tired of his vapourings, I told him plainly that I would have nothing to do with his proposal. He tried to revert to the topic of the glory I should win as the defender of Italy, but I silenced him by telling him that a conflict with the Royal army must be their ruin, and that the King was longing for a fight. Advising him to get back to Venice, I then turned my back on him. I am told that, after I left him, he at first fell into a rage which much alarmed the good monks, and then took to lamentation. Finally, he sent Brother Anselm to me once more as the bearer of his supplications: let me not hand Venice over to the French, and go down to history with the eternal shame of having caused her ruin; if I wanted 100,000 ducats, I could have them; and, if nothing else would move me, let me think of his own danger, for it would be death to go back with the answer which I had given him. I sent him word that my loyalty to the King was proof against offers of twice the salary and a brace of Dukedoms; and as for himself, if there were danger in returning to Venice, let him throw himself at the feet of the King, who of his great clemency would pardon and protect him. . . . Tell all this to the Grand Master, and assure him that not for all the gold in the world would I lay myself open to a charge of infidelity to the King. . . . Tell him to press on with his enterprise, for now is the time ripe.'[1]

Thus there was none to help, as the toils closed round the doomed Republic. On 10th April the Pope, who had already refused to the Orsini permission to fight for Venice, published his adherence to the League. On 27th April he issued a bull declaring that Venice would be excommunicated, unless within twenty-four days she should restore all the possessions of the Church in Romagna and account for all revenues derived from them during her occupancy. By then she had also received the formal defiance of the King of France, for on the 17th his herald had presented himself

[1] *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series iv, vol. xiv, pp. 6–7.

in the Signory's hall of audience, and had told them that it was the intention of his master to wage war upon them as usurpers of lands which belonged to the Pope and the Emperor, to Milan and Ferrara and Mantua. Never in the days of her greatest prosperity had the proud city held her head so high as in this the hour of her lonely peril. To the herald the Doge made answer that Venice had so walked that she had never yet been forsaken of God; had she been a State which broke its faith, the King would not that day have owned one inch of Italian soil; and he might tell his master that Venice took up his challenge boldly, placing her trust in the Eternal God, who never abandons them that walk in the ways of justice and of truth. Her answer to the Pope was affixed to the walls of Rome by unknown hands: she denied and defied the authority of Pope Julius, and appealed to a General Council of the Church.[1]

By the end of April the Venetian forces had assembled on the Oglio; they consisted of 2,300 men-at-arms, about 7,000 light horse, and between thirty and forty thousand foot, of whom fifteen thousand were picked Italian infantry, and the rest were composed of the local militia of the Venetian subject territories. In the great crisis of her fortunes the Republic had enlisted *condottieri* with a free hand, endeavouring even to recruit the Orsini and Savelli from the Papal States; and although the Pope forbade his subjects to take service with his enemies, he could not control individual members of those warrior clans, and Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano, and Bartolommeo d'Alviano took command of the army which was to oppose the French. The preparations were thorough, and did not omit the precaution of a Government censorship of news, Sanuto recording that in consequence of many complaints of the whole city getting news of events by private letters, contrary to the law, it was decided to remind all Governors and officers that they must send news to none but the Signory; the opportunity was taken to give them a hint also that they would do well to send good news rather than bad.[2] One piece of bad news there was no

[1] Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, p. 116; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, col. 95; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 220–1; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 311–12.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, col. 164.

suppressing, and that was a terrific explosion in the great arsenal on 14th March, which caused much damage to life and property, and would have been even more serious but for the fortunate accident that four thousand barrels of powder had been taken away just before and put on board ship. It was supposed at first that the explosion was the work of an incendiary in the pay of France, but subsequent investigation tended to prove that it was due to a spark from a hammer used in nailing down a cask. Rather more than thirty years before there had been a fire in the arsenal caused by a spark from a horse's hoof, and since then all horses employed in the arsenal had been left unshod.[1]

It was of ill augury for the success of the Venetian armies that their leaders should be divided by bitter jealousies and dissensions before ever the enemy had taken the field. These dissensions arose from incompatibility of temperament and outlook between Alviano, who was enterprising, forceful, and impetuous, and Pitigliano, who was cautious, dilatory, and deliberate; and they were aggravated by an arrogance and conceit in Alviano, which were natural to the man, and had been swollen by his recent triumph in the war with the Emperor. Alviano had spent the early spring in a tour of inspection of Venetian fortresses in Lombardy, and, wherever he had gone, he had left behind him a legacy of irritation in the subject cities of the *terra firma*. Many fortifications he had demolished, many he had reconstructed, and in some places he had made entirely new ones, always without the smallest regard for local sentiment or convenience. Thus at Vicenza the idea occurred to him of converting into a stronghold a city which was rich, prosperous, and splendid, but ill-defended. Engaging great gangs of men, he set to work on his plan, which comprised the levelling out of an eminence and the construction of a broad and deep moat. An angry citizen described his methods, and passed an intelligent criticism upon his policy. Alviano, he said, pulled down many fine houses, destroyed many beautiful gardens, and cut down many of the mulberry trees upon which the city depended for its prosperity. Thus the whole city and the whole country-side were saddened, because at a very important season its agricultural routine was dislocated by the

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, cols. 18–19.

diversion of its labour force, and its fairest fields and finest dwellings were involved in a common destruction. 'But the author of these novelties listens to few complaints, and spares neither trees nor fields nor gardens nor houses nor churches, if they stand in the way of his vain design—vain, I say, because I believe that the Venetians, if driven from the field this year, will not benefit by works that are scarcely begun, and, if they afterwards put a strong army into the field, the fortress will not be wanted. Thus a perfectly useless injury, to the tune of a hundred thousand ducats, is being inflicted upon a faithful and valuable city.'[1]

The blind confidence in material defences which is apt in all ages to delude the military engineer was not, as a matter of fact, a characteristic weakness of Alviano, who based his strategy upon the sound principle that attack is the best means of defence. It was by his advocacy of this doctrine that he got at loggerheads with his unadventurous chief. He wanted to take the offensive before the French were ready, march on the Milanese, and establish the war in the enemy's country. Pitigliano objected that an invading army gets no help from fortified places, but must keep in the open, and has no real option to refuse battle, because it cannot retreat without seeming to open the campaign with a reverse, and yet cannot fight without running the risk of suffering a defeat which may expose to invasion the whole country that it exists to defend. In his view, they should aim, not at making conquests, but at covering Venetian territory, avoiding risks to the army, and prolonging the war. He therefore proposed that the Ghiara d'Adda district should be abandoned as being of small military value, and that the army should be concentrated in an impregnable position behind the Oglio, where it could cover all the chief places of the Venetian *terra firma*. The Senate, called upon to arbitrate between its generals, condemned the one plan for its audacity and the other for its pusillanimity, and ordered a compromise: the Oglio should be regarded as a second line of defence; the army was to establish itself on the Adda; but it was to fight only in case of urgent necessity.[2]

[1] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 32–4.

[2] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 218–19; Daru, *Histoire de Venise*, vol. iii, pp. 331–2.

The French preparations were also on an extensive scale, and were made noteworthy by a serious attempt to create a national infantry on the lines which had been suggested by Marshal de Gié during the Neapolitan war. The resuscitation of Gié's plan was commended to Louis XII by his political difficulties with the Swiss Confederacy and by the trouble and waste inherent in the system of mercenary enlistment. By an ordinance of January 1509, issued as part of his preparations for the coming war, he decreed that an infantry force should be raised in France, and that, when raised, it should be subject to the provisions of the existing code which governed the enlistment and discipline of the cavalry. To improve the status of the new regiments, and to remove the reproach which attached to a despised arm, he asked his most famous captains to depute the command of their *gens d'armes* to their lieutenants and to take service temporarily at the head of the newly enrolled foot. The results of these measures were important and durable. The foreign mercenary did not at once disappear from the French army, and Louis himself enlisted some 8,000 Swiss and German infantry for service in Lombardy in the approaching campaign; but henceforth mercenary regiments ceased to be regarded as an essential element in a French army, and an increasingly important part was played by the foot-soldier born and bred in France.[1]

The King crossed the Alps in the middle of April, and on 1st May entered the capital of his Italian dominion with many French and Italian nobles in his train. His army, which consisted of 2,300 men-at-arms, 20,000 foot, and a numerous artillery, had already taken the field, whilst the territories of Venice were also threatened by the Marquis of Mantua, who menaced Casalmaggiore, and by the Papal forces under the command of the Pope's nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, who was preparing to enter Romagna. On the French front the war was begun in the middle of April, when Chaumont moved up to Cassano on the Adda, and opened the campaign with a pleasing success. Opposite Cassano was the Venetian post of Treviglio, an infantry depot and the head-quarters of the Proveditore of the Stradiots, which was defended by a garrison of more

[1] Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, vol. v, part i, pp. 89–90.

than a thousand men. Crossing the river, Chaumont moved on Treviglio, which surrendered at discretion; whereupon the smaller places in the neighbourhood, such as Rivolta and Vaila, also surrendered of their own accord. A *coup de main* against Caravaggio, where the French had intelligence with the people, proved less successful, for the garrison had been reinforced from Crema, and Chaumont was repulsed. Meanwhile, the Marquis of Mantua, who had captured Casalmaggiore together with the Venetian official in charge, abandoned the place and retired, when he heard that the Venetians had crossed the Oglio in force.

This movement by the Venetian army was obtained by the eager advocacy of Alviano, who had fretted and fumed in the enforced inactivity of the camp at Pontevico, and had at last prevailed so far as to secure the dispatch of a message to the Senate, intimating that in the opinion of its officers the moment had come to attack the enemy. His impatience increased by the news that the French had captured Treviglio, Alviano had at length procured an order for a general advance, and in the first days of May the Venetian army moved forward towards Lodi. There on 4th May a council of war met in the commander-in-chief's quarters, to decide what should be done next. Alviano, as usual, was for bold measures, wanting to cross the Adda and march upon the French, in which event he promised his colleagues a certain victory; but, as was also usual, his dash and pluck were opposed by Pitigliano's timorous caution. Pitigliano considered that, as Chaumont had recrossed the river, leaving a garrison of fifty lances and a thousand foot unsupported in Treviglio, it would be better to retake that place, and postpone more decisive action until they should have obtained more exact intelligence as to the numbers, movements, and intentions of the enemy; and in this view he was supported by the Proveditori. 'Gentlemen,' said Alviano, 'if this splendid army is not to go over the river, you must give me an order in writing to that effect, for without such an order I shall consider it my duty to cross.'[1] If we may believe his own subsequent account of these events and of the part he had played in them, he not only regretted the failure to take the offensive, but also disapproved of the proposed

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, col. 173.

movement against Treviglio for fear lest the capture and sack of the place should impair the morale of the troops. The event was to show that such an apprehension was not unreasonable. The Venetians left Lodi on 5th May, re-occupied Rivolta and Vaila, drove back two French squadrons which had come over the Adda, and on 7th May appeared before Treviglio, which surrendered after a sharp resistance. Given over to the troops, the town was sacked 'with a heart-rending accompaniment of cruelty and greed', and with so bad an effect upon discipline that it was only by giving the place to the flames that Alviano could recall the pillagers to duty. Recalled they must be, for Louis and his army had reached Cassano, and the waters of the Adda alone separated the rival forces.

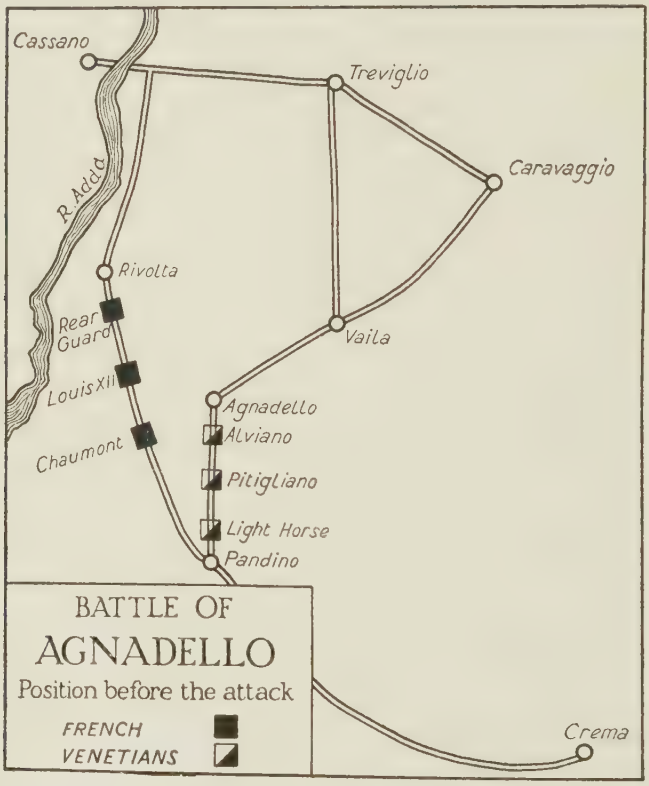
After his success at Treviglio Chaumont had been recalled to Milan, to attend a council-of-war with the King, the Legate, and Robertet, in which the plan of campaign was to be determined. The question was settled by the news of the Venetian threat to Treviglio, for the King considered that it would be very damaging to him, if his first conquest were at once to be lost again under his own eyes, and as soon as he heard of the Venetian advance, he resolved to move forward to the support of his threatened garrison. Though the day was a Tuesday, a day which he regarded as unlucky, he set out on 7th May, leaving anxious Milan to its prayers, and on the 8th reached Cassano, where he began at once to construct bridges of boats and to make his dispositions for crossing the Adda. This operation was performed on 10th May, the light horse going over first, the infantry next, then the artillery, and finally the men-at-arms and the archers, with the King in their midst. No opposition was offered by the Venetians, though they were close at hand. Directly the French got safely over the river, Trivulzio, who accompanied the King, turned to him and told him that the victory was his. Alviano was of much the same opinion, for he had pleaded with the Proveditori for permission to deliver an attack upon Louis whilst in the act of crossing, and, when they would not allow it, told them that they were taking the victory out of his hands. Like many another of the faint-hearted sacrifices of opportunity that lose campaigns, the Venetian preference for inactivity could be defended by

specious argument. There was the danger from the formidable French guns; there were the difficulties with the troops in Treviglio, so intent upon plunder that they would not march; and there was reason to believe that the French, if allowed to cross, might come to regret their precipitancy by finding themselves in trouble with their victualling arrangements. Abundant supplies were, indeed, produced by Lombardy, but on their long journey to the Royal camp they ran many risks of interception by the ubiquitous light horse of the enemy, and repeated losses had caused a dislocation by which the French were already inconvenienced. The difficulties would not grow less as the lines of communication grew longer and passed within easier range of the enemy's outposts. The protection and interception of convoys were in the main matters for the light horse, the arm in which the French were always weak, and the Venetians, with their numerous and brave Stradiots, were unusually strong. Beaten in one place, the Stradiots would draw off only to attack again in another with a fury more devilish than before; they swam the broadest and deepest rivers; they used tracks, of the existence of which the very peasants of the district scarcely knew; and thus with the silent stealth of the Red Indian brave they would penetrate to the spot where an unsuspecting enemy might be most dangerously injured or most mortally assailed.[1]

After crossing the Adda, the King encamped near Cassano, a mile or two away from the Venetian position near Treviglio, and cast about for some means of bringing his enemy to battle. He could not think of attacking their camp, which was strongly fortified and well placed on rising ground; and some of his officers advised that, as the Emperor was coming, and the Venetians could not afford to delay, it would be best to remain inactive and wait for them to offer battle. Knowing Maximilian, however, the King did not care to build upon his punctual arrival, and decided to try the effect of a threat to Rivolta, a village which lay five miles to the southward of his camp, and was occupied by a detachment of Venetian infantry. If that move should fail, he would then advance eastwards into Venetian territory and cut off the supplies which came to their army from Crema and Cremona.

[1] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 48–50.

In this design he was confirmed by the reports of Trivulzio, who went out to reconnoitre, and found that, as the high ground occupied by the Venetians was of no great extent, it would be by no means difficult to turn their position.



The piece of country in which he was about to operate was a rectangular area about four miles broad from east to west and about nine miles long from north to south. At the north-western corner was Cassano, where he had crossed the river, and immediately opposite it, at the north-eastern corner, was Treviglio, where the Venetians were encamped. Half-way down the western or French side lay the village of Rivolta, half-way down the eastern or Venetian side stood the village of Vaila or Vailate, and in the middle of the base line was a third small place called Pandino, about equidistant

from the two camps. Approximately midway between these three villages was a fourth village called Agnadello. Two roads converged on Pandino; the one came from Cassano, traversing the low ground near the Adda and passing through Rivolta; the other came from Treviglio along the higher ground through Vaila and Agnadello. Between the roads lay a belt of brushwood and bushes, which not only hid each of them from the other, but also offered a serious obstacle to the movement of cavalry. Towards their point of convergence the roads were also separated by a dyke or dry river-bed sunk between steep banks; ground broken by ditches and patches of swamp adjoined the dyke; and vineyards covered the slopes, where the ground rose towards the low ridge of hill which was traversed by the road that came from the Venetian camp.

On 11th May the French moved out from their position near Cassano, and marched southwards on Rivolta, presenting to the Venetian leaders a choice between sacrificing the 600 men who held that village and advancing to their relief. Having been told by their spies that many French troops had been sent back over the river, to form escorts for incoming convoys of provisions, the Venetians decided to move forward in the hope that, the enemy being temporarily weakened, they might head him off from the threatened village, or at any rate come upon him whilst he was still engaged with its garrison. In this they were disappointed, the French moving rapidly and capturing Rivolta almost under their eyes; and, when they reached the scene, they found the French awaiting them in an advantageous position, which put an end to the idea of an attack. The two armies then encamped in near proximity to one another, almost within gun-shot, and so close that not only could the drums and trumpets of each be heard plainly in the other, but the outposts could even exchange remarks.

The Venetian generals, who spent money lavishly on intelligence, and received hourly reports from their spies, were presently informed that the intention of the French was to make for Pandino and there to take up a position in which they would be so placed as to be able to take them in rear and cut their communications with Crema and Cremona. In a council of war, at which Pitigliano, Alviano, Andrea

Gritti, the Proveditore, and other officers were present, it was decided to break up the camp, move on Pandino by a safe road running between dykes, and occupy the Pandino position before the French should have reached it; that done, the French must either retreat, when they would run serious risks, or attack, when the Venetians would have the advantage both in situation and in numbers; and the council therefore soothed itself with the conclusion that in either case victory might be regarded as certain. Rapidity of action was vital to the success of this plan, for the Venetians must be the first to reach Pandino, and must not allow themselves to be forestalled by the French, as had happened in the march on Rivolta; and on the morning of 14th May, without waiting for the enemy to start, they moved off down the Pandino road, with the 500 lances, 8,000 infantry, and artillery under Alviano, which had formed the advance-guard on the previous march, acting as the rear-guard during the new operation. They did not expect to be attacked that day, partly because they had got a start of the enemy, and partly because they were marching by the upper road, which the French could only reach across ditches, swamps, and vineyards. They therefore moved forward in extended order, with the light horse, who were to secure the Pandino position, much in advance of the main body, and with the main body in its turn some distance ahead of Alviano's division.

On the same morning the French also set out for Pandino by the lower road, after giving Rivolta to the flames. Unlike their enemies, they marched in battle order, their advance-guard of 500 lances and 10,000 Swiss and Gascon foot being led by Chaumont and Trivulzio, and the 'battle', or main body, being under the command of the King. For some time the impenetrable screen of brushwood hid the armies from each other, so hampering reconnaissance work as to leave each in ignorance that the other was on the move; but as Chaumont neared the village of Agnadello, where the roads began to converge, his scouts caught sight of Alviano's rear-guard, which was then in line with the French van through the greater rapidity of the Venetian advance. They at once reported to the general the presence of the enemy. To bring that enemy to battle was the prime object of the French

operations, and Chaumont immediately swung down towards the river-bed, told his gunners to prepare for action, and made ready to essay a passage of the swamps.

Alviano was not the man to seek safety in flight when an enemy offered battle. On seeing the movement of the French van, he told his men-at-arms to put on their helmets, and proceeded to dispose his force along the farther or eastern side of the Pandino road upon the vine-clad slopes behind the empty river-bed. Some of his guns he sent forward towards the river bank with infantry in support, and the rest he stationed under the protection of the cavalry on the crest of the hill. At the same time he sent a message to Pitigliano that he was about to become engaged. The commander-in-chief replied that he was not to fight, his duty being to avoid battle and bring off his men into a place of safety. Not inclined to submit to any such craven order, Alviano put spurs to his horse to go and expostulate with his Fabian leader, and to represent the difficulties which the French would encounter when they should launch an attack over the steep banks of the river-bed, across swamps formidable to infantry, and through vineyards amid which cavalry could scarcely operate. But Pitigliano was in a state of nervous terror which stood proof against the infectious confidence of his dashing subordinate, and it was in vain that Alviano implored him to turn back, promising him a certain victory in that event. Declining to stay his own advance, Pitigliano imperatively ordered his lieutenant to rejoin his rear-guard and extricate it as rapidly as he could.

Alviano rejoined his men, and, either because it was already too late to draw off, or because his combative instincts got the upper hand, continued to stand his ground without the smallest attempt to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief. In a few minutes the French guns opened fire, and Alviano's replied; but whereas the French fire inflicted some loss on the Venetian infantry, the Venetian counter-fire did little damage to the French, the gunners being in difficulties both with their powder, which was being spoiled by the heavy rain that had begun to fall, and also with their infantry, which had advanced so far that they were afraid of hitting their own men; and after the interchange of some

salvoes Alviano's trumpets sounded the cease-fire. The heavy cavalry of the French advance-guard were waiting for that signal, and, as the trumpets ceased, six hundred men-at-arms charged against the enemy, whilst Swiss and Gascon infantry moved forward in support. The men-at-arms fared ill on ground broken by frequent obstacles and made treacherous by the rain, and at length the ditches and vines brought them to a standstill within gunshot of the Venetian arquebusiers. Without waiting to be shot down, they fell back, and the Swiss were sent forward to attack in their stead. Slipping about in the mud, and unable to preserve their order among the vines, they, too, were soon in confusion; and they retreated precipitately, when Alviano charged down upon them at the head of his men-at-arms. It is difficult to see how Chaumont could have averted defeat, had Alviano received the reinforcements for which he had begged from Pitigliano; but Pitigliano had not detached a man to go to the aid of his rear-guard, whereas help for the wavering French companies was at hand. Chaumont had been a mile or two ahead of his main body and three miles ahead of the rear-guard, when, on first catching sight of the Venetians, he had sent word back to the King that he was in contact with the enemy. On receipt of that message Louis had quickened his pace, and, swinging away to his left, had come up with Chaumont about the time when the Swiss began to fall back before the onslaught of the Venetian horse.

Alviano followed the retreating Swiss, advancing on the French guns, and again sent urgent messages to Pitigliano, entreating that some squadrons of cavalry might be sent back to support him. But none came, and now he had to do, not merely with Chaumont's division, but with the entire French army. When the King joined Chaumont, the French made their dispositions so as to make use of their great numerical superiority. The cavalry again advanced to the attack; the infantry were thrown out on either wing, to encircle the Venetian foot; two companies of horse were ordered to make a détour and take the Venetians in flank; and the approaching rear-guard was diverted to the left, with instructions to work its way round through the vineyards and take the enemy in rear. It may be that in the flush of

success the triumphant Venetian companies might even yet have marched onwards to victory; but at this moment of crisis Alviano's chances were destroyed by desertions in his ranks, two of his *condottieri* leaders going over to the enemy, and a third, from treachery or cowardice, taking to his heels. This spectacle was too much for the rest of his cavalry, which incontinently fled, despite a valiant effort by their commander to rally them. Deprived of the support of their cavalry, and threatened with envelopment by the advancing semicircle of the enemy, the infantry were then obliged to fall back, and soon found themselves in open country, where, exhausted by the long fight, they stood helpless in the slippery mud, at the mercy of the French horse. Infected by the bold spirit of their courageous chief, they disdained even then to surrender, and continued to offer a grim resistance to the assaults of their numerous enemies. But the odds were too heavy against them, for the French were not merely in overwhelming numbers, but were fighting with more than their usual *élan* in their desire to avenge their initial reverse and in the enthusiasm inspired by the presence of the King, who had gone into action in their midst and was exposing himself as freely as any private soldier in the ranks. When the battle had been in progress for three hours, the battered remnants of the Venetian infantry at length broke and fled.

The Venetian losses were exceptionally heavy in relation to the numbers engaged, but the prisoners were few, for most of the heroic infantry had fallen in the battle, the rest were cut down in the subsequent cavalry pursuit, and of Alviano's two battalions one was believed to have been completely destroyed. The cavalry, on the other hand, escaped lightly, never having been hotly engaged, and having retired early in the day; so that few men-at-arms were killed or taken, and few dead horses were found upon the field. The French claimed to have inflicted upon the Venetians a loss of 13,000 or 14,000 men in slain alone, and it was commonly believed that the casualties reached a total of 10,000; but dispassionate observers with some knowledge of the facts estimated the number of the slain at 3,000 or 4,000 at most. Twenty-eight guns were captured, eighteen or twenty of them large pieces, as good as any which the French them-

selves possessed, and the rest falconets and culverins; all Alviano's artillery horses and munitions, about one hundred arquebuses with their stands, much heavy armour thrown away by fugitive soldiers, and the entire baggage train of the Venetian army, which had been sent to Caravaggio, were also among the spoils. The French losses were disproportionately light, and occurred for the most part among the men-at-arms who had made the first ineffectual charges: in those charges fifty or sixty men had fallen, whilst many others had been wounded, and many horses had been injured; but no noted names occurred in the lists of the slain, and the infantry had suffered no more than trifling casualties.

Bartolommeo d'Alviano was among the prisoners, and perhaps no capture could have been more agreeable to the King of France than that of his spirited antagonist. During the battle Alviano had been joined by Vincenzo Valier, the Proveditore of the artillery, who brought him a couple of guns about the time when he was advancing with his cavalry to the relief of his hard-pressed foot. In the French counter-attack Valier was struck and knocked off his horse during one of the *mêlées*, lost his helmet, which was not laced up, and was then hit on the head. Helped by the pages, he withdrew to a neighbouring ditch, and there found Alviano attended only by a single companion, and on the point of being surrounded by advancing French. Alviano got him a horse, and told him to mount and save himself before it was too late; and this he did. The general might have followed his example, but refused to do so whilst there was still a chance that he might rally his men. Standing his ground, he was attacked by French men-at-arms, who soon unhorsed him. Sword in hand, he fought on upon his feet, keeping his assailants at bay, and wounding some of them; but he could find no opportunity to remount, and was on the point of being cut down, when some one recognized him and called out: 'Do not kill him; he is Alviano'; and he was then taken prisoner, cut about the face and with several body wounds. The King called for him, as soon as he heard of his capture, received him graciously, and gave orders that his wants should be supplied. It is said that he was asked by Louis why he had accepted battle upon such unequal terms, and

replied that in doing so he had, perhaps, run the risk of defeat, but at least he had had the honour of matching himself against a King of France.[1]

After a brief captivity in the Castello of Milan he was transferred to the castle at Loches, in which Ludovic had been shut up, and there had leisure to consider whether the honour of fighting a King of France might not be purchased at too high a cost. The Venetians had suffered a reverse which in the circumstances amounted to a disaster, and for that event Alviano was primarily responsible. When the object of the Venetian leaders was to avoid the battle which the French were seeking, he had deliberately halted to await the enemy; when he ought to have extricated himself without fighting, or, if that were impossible, to have confined himself to a delaying rear-guard action, he had made his dispositions for a pitched battle; and in that battle he had engaged in defiance of his commander-in-chief's express prohibition and had persevered in face of a specific declaration that he would receive no aid from the rest of the army. But if Alviano must be censured, the Count of Pitigliano cannot be absolved from blame. There was much to be said for his view that he ought to run no hazard with an army which alone stood between Venice and destruction, and that he was bound to base his strategy upon the consideration that, whereas the French could suffer no more than a setback, it was possible for him 'to lose the war in an afternoon'. But the action of his subordinate created a new situation, and Pitigliano ought to have seen that this situation called for new decisions. When Alviano turned at bay, it was certain that one of three things must happen, and each of them would demand the presence of the commander-in-chief and his men: either the fight must be equal, when Pitigliano could turn the scale; or it would go in favour of Alviano, when he could press home the victory; or it might turn to the advantage of the French, when he could save his rear-guard from disaster. By leaving Alviano to his fate he managed, indeed, to bring off the rest of the army from the

[1] Hardÿ de Périni, *Batailles françaises*, vol. i, p. 205. Alviano himself said at a later date that, when he was taken to the King, Louis 'did not then know whether he would have the victory or no': Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 238–9.

field, but in a state of demoralization which made its escape a matter of small military importance.[1]

Part of the army broke away at once, and in disordered fragments fled through Lombardy by various roads. The greater part Pitigliano contrived to keep under some control, and at the head of these troops he spent the night in great alarm under the walls of Caravaggio. The town refused to admit him within its gates, and it was known that the whole Ghiara d'Adda district cherished the memory of its old connexion with Milan and looked unfavourably upon its new Venetian masters. The commander-in-chief and the Commissaries dared not remain in a hostile region with dispirited and disorganized troops. They therefore retired on Brescia, where the people told Pitigliano that, if he were to come as a private citizen, he would be welcome, but if as a Venetian soldier, his presence would be superfluous, as they were prepared to defend themselves. He continued his retreat, with the enemy in pursuit, and before the end of the month had reached Peschiera, near the southern shore of the Lago di Garda. By this time his force was reduced to one thousand men-at-arms and five or six thousand foot: the spirits of these troops were of the poorest; supplies were short; and desertions grew more numerous every day. Especially was this the case among the troops drawn from the evacuated districts, who dreaded lest they should be treated by Louis as rebels after their homes had passed into French occupation by voluntary surrender. Keeping his men together as best he could, Pitigliano hurried on, past Verona, which would not admit him, and past Padua, where he was once more repelled; and in a few days, with the remnant of his army still further weakened by desertion, he was encamped at Mestre, within sight of the Lagoons.

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, cols. 173, 177, 181, 206, 222–3, 232–5, 286–8, and vol. xvi, cols. 236–9 (Alviano's account); Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 300–31 (account by Nasi and Pandolfini on a mission to Milan); *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xiv, pp. 88–9 (the Marquis of Mantua's account to his wife); L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 47–50, 53–8; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 223–6; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 204–7; Daru, *Histoire de Venise*, vol. iii, pp. 334–6; Hardÿ de Périni, *Batailles françaises*, vol. i, pp. 200–5; *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i, pp. 132–3; Taylor, *Art of War in Italy*, pp. 18–20, 117–19.

His plight would have been yet more serious, had the French pressed home their pursuit, but Louis was apprehensive of exciting suspicion among his allies by sending his army over the Mincio into territory which the treaty of Cambray assigned to Maximilian. The King slept at Cassano on the night of the battle, and on the morrow his troops moved forward to garner the rich harvest of their victorious swords. Caravaggio surrendered to them on the morrow of the battle, and on the following day they were received in Bergamo. At Brescia, where Pitigliano had been refused admission, the people seized the gates, to open them to the French, and the example was followed by the people of Pizzighettone and Cremona. At Crema, too, though the place was strong and decidedly Venetian in its sympathies, the voluntary surrender of Brescia produced such an effect that the Governor meekly abandoned the idea of resistance. At Peschiera resistance was attempted on the orders of a more adventurous official, but on 29th May the place was carried by assault in a few hours, when the four hundred men of the garrison were put to the sword, and the Governor and his two sons were hanged from the battlements of the citadel as a warning to other places not to be obstinate in resistance. Thus within a few days of his first success and within a few weeks of the opening of the campaign Louis had taken possession of the whole of the territory, formerly belonging to Milan, which had been assigned to him as his share of the spoils; and in the Ghiara d'Adda, Crema, Cremona, Bergamo, Brescia, and their dependent territories, Venice had lost possessions which gave her an annual revenue of 300,000 ducats. Many of her officials had also been taken in the captured cities, among them Marino Giorgio, Proveditore of the Bergamasco, a man of great importance in his native city; and it was said that the Castello at Milan, in which the French lodged their prisoners, was so full of Venetian gentlemen that a well-attended meeting of the Pregadi might have been held within its precincts.[1]

The fall of the whole of the mainland empire of Venice was averted only by the scruple which bade Louis halt on the western side of the Mincio. The people of Verona

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 337.

refused to admit Pitigliano, requested the Venetian Rectors to leave the city, and sent to the King of France, offering to take the oath of obedience. They were told that they must surrender to the representative of the Emperor, and this they proceeded to do, but only to be informed by the Imperial ambassador, after he had received their submission, that he held no commission to act as their Governor, and that they must await a Governor sent by Maximilian. The result was unfortunate, for the Veronese were thus left without any government and with an angry suspicion that an acquisition so cavalierly treated could not be much valued by its new possessor. Meanwhile, a young noble of Vicenza, who had been banished by the Venetians, and, fleeing to Germany, had become a favourite at the Imperial Court, had been begging Maximilian to be allowed to go and take possession of his native place in the Emperor's name, offering with the aid of his partisans to occupy the whole district without the help of a single soldier. Collecting a small body of adventurers, he appeared at Vicenza, which welcomed him as the representative of Maximilian; and Padua then sent to him to offer its submission.[1]

While events so alarming to Venice were occurring close at hand, ill news from other quarters also came in apace. The Papal forces, which had entered Romagna, captured Brisighella after defeating the troops which were going to its relief, and then occupied all the smaller places in the county of Faenza. Faenza itself surrendered when it had the news of the French victory, and then Ravenna opened its gates. And whilst the leaders of the Cambray band were pocketing the valuables, the lesser fry did not neglect the chance to grab the small change. The Duke of Ferrara drove out the Venetian magistrate known as the Visdomino, and occupied the Polesine, Este, and Monselice, which formed his portion of the spoils. The Marquis of Mantua got possession of Asola and Lonato, which had been lost to Venice in his grandfather's days. At the same time Friuli was overrun by an Imperial army, which took Feltre and Belluno, and paved the way for the surrender of Trieste, whilst in Naples the Spaniards found no obstacle to the reoccupation of the mortgaged sea-ports. Well might a chronicler say that

[1] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 66–9, 79–83.

Venice resembled the crow in Aesop's fable, which on a sudden was plucked clean.

The time was one of terror and humiliation for the proud Republic. Her one army was in headlong flight. One after another the strong places which were expected to hold up the enemy were giving in without a blow. Her mainland empire, upon which she was largely dependent for her supplies, was slipping from her grasp, and the grim shadow of starvation began to creep across her emptying granaries. Side by side with famine marched the spectre of tumult, for within her walls were many aliens, covetous of her wealth, and a teeming proletariat, denied political privileges and therefore indifferent to her fate. The shutters were up in her shops. The doors of her law-courts were closed. A writer from one of the subject territories noted how the stricken city changed its very aspect, the ladies no longer appearing in their gorgeous dresses, and no musical instrument being anywhere heard. In sorrow and alarm a Venetian patrician marked the awful gloom of this strange Ascensiontide, when a great festival was kept as a fast, when none trod the approaches which should have been gay with a concourse of incoming visitors, when the citizens stayed within doors to worry and to weep, and a great silence brooded over the empty spaces of the deserted Piazza.[1]

Yet it is not true, as Machiavelli would have us believe, that the Lion of St. Mark lay down like a lamb in the hour of adversity and peril. In one of his military essays this great writer has drawn a sharp contrast between the Romans in classical times and the Venetians of his own day. After reminding us how the beaten Scipio told the victorious enemy that it was not the Roman way either to grow insolent in victory or to lose heart under reverses, he points to the story of Agnadello for proof that 'the exact reverse of this was the case with the Venetians. They imagined that they owed their prosperity to qualities which, in fact, they did not possess, and were so puffed up that they treated the King of France as a son, underrated the power of the Church, thought the whole of Italy too small a field for their ambi-

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 227–8, 231; L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 62–3; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. viii, cols. 248, 253, 265–6, 314, 373–4.

tion, and aimed at creating a world-wide empire like that of Rome. Then when Fortune turned her back upon them, and they were beaten by the French at Vailate, they not only lost the greater part of their territory by the defection of their people, but, of their own accord, out of sheer cowardice and faint-heartedness, they gave back most of their conquests to the Pope and the King of Spain. In their discouragement they even went so far as, through their Envoy, to offer to become tributaries of the Emperor, and to try to move the Pope to compassion by writing to him in a tone of craven submissiveness. This reverse befell them when the war had lasted only four days, and the battle itself was only half-lost; for only half their troops were engaged and one of their Proveditori escaped. Thus, if there had been a spark of energy or enterprise in Venice, they might have marched on Verona with 25,000 men to try their fortune again, and await any favourable turn that might give them a chance of victory, or at any rate of a less ignoble defeat, and of obtaining honourable terms; but by their unwarlike spirit, the natural result of the absence of all military organization, they lost both heart and land at a single throw. The like fate will befall all such as behave themselves as they have done, for this arrogance in prosperity, and cowardice in adversity, are the effect of the spirit in which a man lives and the education he has received. If these are vain and frivolous, he will be the same; if the reverse, the man will be of a different stamp, and will know enough of the world not to be over-elated when good befalls him, or too much cast down when he meets with reverses. And what holds good in regard to individuals also holds good in regard to those many individuals who live together in the same Republic; they will attain to that measure of perfection which the life of the State, as a whole, has attained. It has often been said before, that the chief support of all States consists in a strong army, and that no system of laws and no constitution can be called good which does not provide for this, but I do not think it superfluous to repeat it; for all history proves its truth, and shews also that no army can be strong that is not well disciplined, and that it is impossible to secure good discipline unless the State is defended by her own subjects.'[1]

[1] See Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 314–15.

The condemnation is too severe. It is not true that Venice tamely gave away what she might have retained and shamefully suffered indignities which she might have avoided. Neither is it true, as other writers have alleged, that she made a spectacular gift of freedom to her subject cities in the hope of saving herself at their expense. She gave way just so far as she was compelled by the extremity of her peril, yielding her ground inch by inch. She ordered the enlistment of a new army, and sent her patricians to rally the forces in the field. She decreed an increase in her fleet, which was strengthened by the equipment of new galleys. The treasury was furnished to deal with the crisis, and a patriotic stream of private gifts flowed steadily into the coffers of the State. Special measures were taken to ensure her domestic tranquillity and to safeguard her food supplies: her approaches were patrolled; her rogues and vagabonds were ejected, and her aliens and suspects were expelled; stores were laid in, and the law which forbade the carriage of food-stuffs to Venice in foreign bottoms was repealed. If she initiated negotiations with some of her enemies, it was because she had no other hope of bringing the confederacy to loose its strangle-hold. If she freed her subjects from their oaths of obedience, it was because she saw what might be gained by that generous gesture. No longer then need she divide her few remaining troops; no longer need she fear to lose the affection of her peoples by involving them in perils which she could not avert; let them yield, and their submission would increase the chances of disunion among her foes. Nor did she leave the cities wholly to their fate or give them up without an effort to save them. She ordered Pitigliano to hold Verona, and even contemplated the possibility of sending the Doge to the army, to animate the troops by his presence. She appointed commissaries to undertake the defence of Vicenza and Padua. She told the Captain of Rovigo that he was not to leave his post, unless he should be convinced of imminent hazard in remaining. Remembering these things, and recalling the part which Venice was still destined to play on the European stage, we may think that the conduct of the Republic is more justly appraised in the tribute of a modern scholar than in the censorious judgement of the Florentine thinker. 'Venice', wrote Cipolla, 'met her

doom with dignity, nay, with glory. She profited by the experience gained during many centuries of splendid life to improve her governmental methods in the spheres of administration and of policy; and in foreign affairs she remained the ever-watchful sentinel and advance-guard, protecting civilization against the Turk. Alone of the States of Italy, she felt the whole weight of the storm let loose upon the peninsula at the close of the Quattrocento; she experienced the consequences of the new age, but survived them. From the wreath of laurel which decked her majestic brow she lost, indeed, some leaves; but she could boast that they had been plucked from her in a contest, at first economic and then military, in which all the most powerful nations of Europe had banded themselves together for her destruction.'[1]

[1] Carlo Cipolla, *Storia delle Signorie italiane dal 1313 al 1530*, vol. ii, pp. 700–1.

XXIII

LOUIS XII AND JULIUS II

Great as was the peril in which she stood during the weeks that succeeded Agnadello, Venice was not actually as near disaster as a superficial observer would have been likely to assume. Many things told in her favour, and though none of them was of itself decisive, yet collectively they sufficed to ensure her salvation by their cumulative effect: among them were her impregnable position; the affection of her subjects, which the bad conduct of her enemies speedily revived and augmented; the too great power of those enemies, and the too easy victory which increased their natural tendency to quarrel among themselves; the scruples of Louis and the dilatoriness of the Emperor, which prevented the victory being pressed home; the doubtful loyalty to the League of some powers, which were included in it; and the opposition to its projects on the part of others, which had been shut out. What Venice owed to divided counsels and want of resolution in her enemies was indicated by the Florentine ambassadors who were in Milan in June 1509 and were in a position to know the facts. They told how the Emperor was then advocating an attack on the Venetian capital, and they declared that, although that proposal had not been mooted at Cambray, the King of France was inclined to accept it. There were difficulties, however: an attack on the Lagoons required the co-operation of Spain, who was more powerful at sea than any of her allies, and Ferdinand had no wish to see Venice destroyed; at the French Court also the scheme had its critics, led by La Trémoille, who expressed distrust of the Emperor, and thought it better to come to terms with Venice, so as to baulk the Emperor of a success which might make him dangerous to France. The fear with which this party regarded Maximilian was strengthened by their own sovereign's intention to return to France. That Louis should leave Italy so soon seemed to many to be unwise, seeing how his departure was likely to augment the authority of the Emperor in the peninsula, to stimulate the ambitions of Julius and Ferdinand, and to revive the drooping spirits of the Venetians. The Pope was already suspected

of intriguing secretly to keep Louis and Maximilian apart, and Robertet did not hide his conviction that his master had twice blundered, first in not following up his victory, and secondly in deciding to leave Italy when he ought to have spent the winter there.[1]

When it became known that Louis meant to go, and it was also seen that Maximilian did not come, not only did the Venetians themselves begin to take fresh heart, but their subjects in the mainland cities were emboldened to take stock of their position and to compare their present with their former lot. That comparison was eminently favourable to the Republic. The Venetians had been indulgent masters, requiring from their dependencies nothing beyond obedience and a moderate revenue. Their successors made haste to display the qualities which a suffering Italy had learned to look for in her barbarian invaders, and the *terra firma* was soon groaning under the greed, licence, and indiscipline of the conquerors. Machiavelli, then on a mission to the Emperor, reported that the allies were pillaging the whole country, and had made themselves very unpopular; the peasants, he said, were so enraged that they were putting up the fiercest resistance; and he was sure that, the considerate treatment of Venice being everywhere remembered, the feelings of affection with which she was regarded would steadily grow stronger, the longer the war went on.[2] As the garrisons of the occupied cities were for the most part small, the peoples soon began to nurse hopes of effecting a deliverance from their oppressors, and in the second week of July the Senate began to receive news of insurrectionary movements in several important places. They gave orders that, subject to the paramount necessity for providing adequate protection for Treviso, which had remained true to them, the Proveditori should support these movements to the utmost of their ability. Before long they had the immense satisfaction of learning that with troops hidden in farm carts Andrea Gritti had succeeded in surprising Padua, where he had re-hoisted the banner of St. Mark on the anniversary

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 381, 383, 387–9.

[2] P. Villari, *The Life and Times of Niccolò Machiavelli*, Eng. trans., vol. i, pp. 497–500.

of the day on which the Venetians had first taken the place more than a century before. The fall of this great city showed what courage and resource might achieve elsewhere, and in all his insecurely held acquisitions the representatives of the Emperor began to tremble for the safety of their towns. French detachments being hurried into them, Vicenza and Verona were saved for Maximilian, at all events for a time; but a Venetian force under Lucio Malvezzi succeeded in an attempt on Legnago, an important post on the Adige.

The capture of Legnago speedily bore fruit. Being well aware of the temper of the people in his city, and being therefore thoroughly scared by the fall of Padua, the Imperial Governor of Verona sent off post-haste to the Marquis of Mantua, begging him to collect some men and hasten to his aid. The Marquis set out, and halted at Isola della Scala, a hamlet in the Veronese not far from the post which had been captured by Lucio Malvezzi. Informed of Gonzaga's movements, Malvezzi moved out of Legnago, surprised the Marquis, dispersed his force, and captured the leader. It is said that, when he was brought a prisoner into Venice, and the people shouted that the Marquis of Mantua was coming, Gonzaga called to them: 'You greet the Marquis of Mantua, but he is not here. He who speaks to you is Francesco Gonzaga; the Marquis is in Mantua,' meaning by this that, although he might be in their power, yet Mantua was safe in the power of his son. It was a fine thing to say, if Gonzaga really said it, but argues a strength of mind which we should scarcely expect to find in the man at any time, and least of all at a time when he was nervous, low-spirited, and ill. Though present in the French camp at Agnadello, he had not been well enough to take part in the battle, and the French, who had suspected him of poltroonery, were not much concerned when they heard that he had been captured. Louis wrote to the Marchioness to condole with her, and offered to send Yves d'Alègre to her aid with a detachment of French troops; but this offer, obviously inspired by self-interested motives, the prudent Isabella courteously declined.[1]

[1] A. Luzio, 'La Reggenza d' Isabella d' Este durante la prigiona del marito, 1509–1510', in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xiv, pp. 9, 17, 20–1.

Meanwhile the dilatory Emperor, roused to a tardy activity by the loss of Padua and the doubtful security of the rest of his new possessions, prepared at length to take the field. The army which he himself marshalled in Germany was large, and when he had been joined by the lances and guns sent by the French, by Spanish and Papal troops, by contingents from Ferrara, and by Italian infantry recruited by his own officers, his total forces made up an imposing array. His first business was the recovery of Padua, and the Venetian hopes of salvation hinged entirely upon the defence of that powerful fortress. All had been done by the Signory that foresight could suggest, enthusiasm inspire, and energy accomplish. The fortifications had been overhauled; superfluous gates had been walled up; money, munitions, and supplies had been poured in; every available gun had been drawn through the gates; every man who could be spared had been posted on the walls. The flower of the Venetian youth hastened to set out for the post of danger, with the two sons of the Doge at their head, and four thousand volunteers from among the people followed the young patricians to the front. All who cared for the fate of Venice were eager to bear their share in a resistance which all knew to be of supreme importance for the ultimate issue of the war.

The enemy appeared before Padua in the middle of August, being then 100,000 strong, but not as yet supplied with their full complement of 100 guns. They suffered from the animosity of an enraged peasantry, and were harassed by the incessant sorties of the ubiquitous and elusive Stradiots. Their guns did not come, and it was the middle of September before a sustained bombardment could be begun. Their attempts to cut off the town's water supply were frustrated, and their assaults on the walls were repulsed. Their difficulties were aggravated by the dislike with which the captains of different nationalities regarded each other, the French leader, La Palice, being on specially bad terms with the officer who acted as Maximilian's chief of staff. On 29th September a furious assault, preceded by a terrific bombardment, was successfully repelled by the garrison of Padua, and on 2nd October the siege was raised. Maximilian retired ingloriously to the Tyrol, the French returned

to Milan, and the Pope withdrew his men. Following on the heels of the retreating besiegers, the Venetians occupied Citadella, Bassano, and Feltre, and were welcomed in Monselice, Este, Montagnana, and Cologna. Presently Vicenza also returned beneath their rule, and Verona alone remained to the Emperor of all that the French had won for him on the field of Agnadello.

Thus a year which had seemed likely to witness the destruction of Venice ended not unsatisfactorily for her, although its last days were clouded by a considerable misfortune. After their triumph at Padua the Signory concentrated their forces at Monselice, to recover the Polesine and to attack Ferrara in conjunction with a fleet which their admiral, Angelo Trevisan, had led up the Po. Trevisan advanced to within eleven miles of Ferrara and set up a bridge of boats by which the army might cross the river. Distracted by furious attacks on his bridge-head, Trevisan did not notice that the enemy were making gun emplacements at a spot on the river bank which commanded his anchorage; still less was he aware that upstream they were constructing a pontoon capable of being manœuvred down upon him by means of oars, rudders, and dragging anchors of ballast. On 21st December, as the evening closed in cold and grey over the misty river, the Duke of Ferrara and his brother assembled their troops, brought up their guns, and put the last touches to their pontoon; and before the long, dark night was over, Trevisan and his crews suddenly found themselves in the centre of a veritable inferno of shot. Darkness helped to deepen the confusion of the surprise and to complete the disaster: the bridge of boats was smashed and went adrift, eighteen ships and galleys out of twenty-four sank or caught fire, and five thousand men of the crews were killed or captured.[1]

This severe reverse was discouraging for Venice, but in the meantime the hopes which she based upon the affection of her subjects and upon her successful defence of Padua had been strengthened by the knowledge which she had acquired of growing dissensions among her enemies. From the first

[1] *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xiv, pp. 35–6; L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 158–64; C. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol. iii, p. 83.

she had looked for an eventual fracture of the fragile bonds which held the Emperor and the King of France together, and in the dark days after Agnadello one of her first acts had been an attempt to buy off Maximilian by an offer to concede all his demands. Maximilian's attitude was correct; he declined to initiate negotiations without the knowledge of his allies; but correctness was a poor substitute for cordiality, and cordiality was lacking. Though Louis was anxious for a meeting with Maximilian to concert with him a common policy in Italy, and though in July 1509 such a meeting was actually arranged, yet somehow or other the weeks passed by and the interview never took place. Louis was much offended, and showed it when the representative of the Emperor requested him to postpone his projected departure from Italy in consequence of the Venetian success at Padua. 'And where, pray, is the Emperor?' he replied. 'I know where he is, and I know where he ought to have been, namely, at Padua. I have made up my mind to leave on Monday, and neither the Emperor nor any one else shall stop me.'[1] Once back in France, he let it be understood that he would not return to Italy except under the strongest compulsion, and his reluctance was shared to the full by his lords and gentlemen, who disliked nothing so heartily as any talk of returning to the peninsula.[2] Whilst this was the attitude of the King of France, his feelings were reciprocated by the Emperor, who held his allies responsible for his miserable failure at Padua—a failure the more galling in that it contrasted so glaringly with Louis' rapid and overwhelming success—and complained especially of the French, who had betrayed him, so he said, by the inadequacy of their support. When the French offered to recover Padua for him, he curtly refused, and he was not pressed by the King, who was not at all sorry to see him waste his resources in an unprofitable struggle with Venice. Whether he would long continue to do so became doubtful, when in November he permitted the Signory to send delegates to Mantua for the purpose of engaging in a discussion with his representatives, and more doubtful still, when in December he gave the

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 395.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 451.

Signory to understand that he was willing to receive their envoys in audience.[1] By New Year's Day the ambassadors of the allies were sitting in conference at Blois, to devise a means of keeping the Emperor in the war.[2]

At the same time the King of France was involved in a new quarrel with the Pope—a quarrel of which Guicciardini truly said that it had deeper roots than the small cause from which it seemed to proceed. In August 1509 the Cardinal of Pavia had assured Pandolfini that Louis and Julius were on the best of terms, each having promised to aid the other in the preservation of his possessions. The Pope, he said, no longer suspected the King, seeing that the King of late had twice come to Italy, first on the Genoa business and then to take the field against Venice, and each time, after doing what he had come to do, had gone home without attempting anything else; and, moreover, he was no longer afraid that d'Amboise could turn him out of the Papacy. He had therefore resolved to support Louis rather than Maximilian, whom he found changeable and restless, and he had concluded an agreement for giving a Cardinal's hat to Chaumont's brother, Monseigneur d'Albi. The immediate cause of the break in these amicable relations was that, the Bishop of Avignon having died in Rome, the Pope appointed to the see without consulting the King, whereupon the King sequestrated the incomes of all Milanese benefices held by persons living in Rome, and the Pope revenged himself by refusing to complete the grant of the red hat promised to the Bishop of Albi. On 26th October an ambassador at the Papal Court reported that there was a great controversy between the Pope and the King of France, the Pope being furious at the King's sequestration of clerical incomes and at his usurpation of the right to appoint to benefices. Julius had, indeed, received in Consistory the Bishop of Bayeux, upon whom the Cardinalate had been conferred whilst in France, but he was withholding the red hat promised to Chaumont's brother. From another source Sanuto learned

[1] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 309–16.

[2] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 456–7.

that one day in Consistory the Pope proposed to confer a Bishopric on a certain Frenchman; a French Cardinal protested that the man was hostile to the King; but the Pope, answering that it was not to the King that he was hostile, but to the Cardinal of Rouen's treacheries, adhered to his position, and gave him the Bishopric. In November Julius was believed to have threatened that he would ally himself with the King of England and with any other enemies of France, and Robertet was complaining openly that, 'whilst the Pope, as Head of the Church, should seek to reconcile Christian Princes when they quarrel, this Pope has devoted all his energies to sowing discord and dissension between His Majesty and other rulers'.[1]

It was in this temper that Julius began to take stock of the situation created by the battle of Agnadello, and to come to the conclusion that that situation somewhat surpassed his desires. In joining the League of Cambray he had had as his objects the recovery of the Church's possessions in Romagna and such a diminution in the power and influence of Venice as would deprive her of the ability to withstand his designs. He had never desired her destruction, the ill effects of which upon his own position and the future of Italy he clearly apprehended, and he now declared that, had Venice not existed, it would have been necessary to create her. 'As Gregorovius justly observes, a voice was whispering to him that, if Venice were destroyed, Italy would be in danger of being left at the mercy of the barbarians, the Holy See would lose its independence, and Christendom would be deprived of its best bulwark against the Turk. Of these considerations the last weighed more with Julius than has generally been believed, for historians exaggerate greatly when they depict him as an exclusively political Pope. Cast in a Titanic mould, he cherished a most exalted notion of his dignity as Supreme Pontiff, together with strong religious convictions and a sincere wish to extricate the Church from the slough in which the Borgias had plunged her. Even when he was in the very act of stirring up war against

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques*, vol. ii, pp. 400, 406, 441–3; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 261–2; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. ix, cols. 296–7.

Venice, grandiose crusading projects were simmering in his mind.'[1]

Venice was not slow to perceive and profit by the Pope's altered disposition. She had approached him soon after Agnadello, as she had approached the other members of the alliance in those anxious days, when she could afford to leave no stone unturned; but whilst she had thought it possible that she might succeed in satisfying Ferdinand or in buying off the Emperor, she had not ventured to expect success either with Julius, whom she regarded as the brain of the Cambray conspiracy, or with Louis XII, who was its mailed fist. The Venetian Cardinals, who as Cardinals had access to the Pope, were instructed to warn him against French designs, to indicate the dangers of foreign domination in Italy, and to point out the inevitable consequences of the permanent enslavement of Venice. Julius answered harshly, but contrived to convey an impression that his harshness was assumed for the sake of keeping up appearances with his confederates, and that at bottom he had his own suspicions of the foreigners, so that he was not to be regarded as irreconcilable. Vague and indefinite though it was, the hint spurred the Signory to further exertions, and a formal request was submitted to Julius to receive an embassy, which in the name of the Republic would humble itself at his feet and crave absolution. The Pope referred the request to a Consistory, in which he allowed it to be seen that he would not object to a reconciliation, and, disregarding the protests of the French and Imperial ambassadors, he told the Venetians that the admission of their embassy was a thing not beyond the bounds of hope.

The ambassadors, six in number and selected from amongst the Republic's most distinguished and experienced sons, were appointed at the end of June, and left immediately for the Eternal City. The haughty Pontiff took care that nothing should be omitted which might emphasize the peculiar character of their mission and make patent the extremity of their need. Whereas such a mission would ordinarily enter Rome with great pomp and display and be welcomed by the whole Papal Court, this delegation entered at dead of night,

[1] A. Luzio, 'La Reggenza d'Isabella d'Este', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xiv, p. 40.

arrayed in mourning garb, and was permitted to pass unescorted and unnoticed through silent streets. Instead of being ushered to the Pope's presence at once and with every mark of honour, the ambassadors of Venice were for a long time ignored, and, when at length admitted to an audience, were received discourteously. Julius roughly told them that he would talk of absolution when his terms had been accepted. Those terms were known, and, rigorous and almost brutal though they were, the Signory could not venture to reject them. Julius required that Venice should acknowledge the justice of the Papal admonition, withdraw her appeal to a General Council, accept the principle of clerical exemption from taxation, abandon her claim to nominate to Bishoprics, grant free navigation of the Adriatic to all the Pope's subjects, revoke all unauthorized treaties with Papal towns, renounce interference in the affairs of Ferrara, withdrawing her Visdomino or resident magistrate, undertake to give no countenance to any rebels against the Pope's authority, and bind herself to participate in the projected expedition against the Turk. In return, the Pope was to accede to her humble request for absolution, promise her his good offices in the future, and accord her permission to recruit in his dominions. On 4th February 1510 the Senate authorized its representatives to make peace on these terms, if none better could be obtained, but with the secret reservation, solemnly recorded on 15th February, that Venice acknowledged no binding force in terms to which necessity had constrained her to submit. On 24th February St. Peter's witnessed the ceremony of absolution, in which Venice purged her offences against the Holy See, and thereby detached from the hostile confederacy the most dangerous of its members.

Indeed, Julius had done more than desert his allies; he had resolved to range himself against them, having persuaded himself that the power of the foreigner in Italy had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. He openly avowed his dislike of French domination in the peninsula, complaining that the French bird wanted to be cock of the walk. He confided to the Venetians that the French took away his appetite and spoiled his sleep, so that in his anxiety he spent the night pacing up and down his room, though declaring that in his gloomiest hours he yet hoped for the

best, and believed that it must be God's will that he should deliver Italy out of French hands.[1] The reconciliation with Venice was a first blow struck in the process of deliverance, and Julius was not ashamed to boast that by it he had planted a dagger in the French King's heart. In the struggle to which he looked forward he hoped to enlist on his side all the forces of Italian nationalism, and henceforth the cry, 'Fuori i barbari', became the watchword of his policy. Since it was a policy which demanded for its successful accomplishment a material power far greater than his own resources and those of the shaken Venetian Republic could supply, it became his object to substitute for the existing league against Venice a new league against France. He thought that he could count upon Ferdinand of Aragon and upon Henry VIII of England, both of whom he believed to be jealous of Louis and eager to thwart French designs in Italy; he supposed that no great difficulty would be encountered in detaching the Emperor from an ally whom he had long detested and in getting him out of a war in which he had experienced defeat and humiliation; and he believed that the Swiss, dissatisfied with the sharp practices and parsimony of the French, would readily enter the service of a paymaster likely to prove at once more just, more lenient, and more liberal.

His expectations were not immediately realized, for neither Maximilian nor Ferdinand nor Henry displayed much readiness to fill the parts which he had assigned to them. So far from deserting the French, Maximilian was being drawn to them by his shame at the defeat before Padua and by his longing for revenge. He told his daughter that he knew of no way by which he might come to a satisfactory settlement of his Italian affairs without the help of his good brother, the King of France, adding that he regarded an agreement with him as his sole security against being ejected from Italy altogether by Julius and his new allies.[2] In the mind of Ferdinand there was no lack of willingness to support a movement for arresting French pro-

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. x, cols. 369, 540; 'Iste Gallus vult omnes galinas pro se.'

[2] Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 296–7.

gress, but in his caution he desired first to be sure that the movement was adequate to the proposed end and that his adhesion would not expose him to danger or expense. Pending such assurance, he deemed it prudent to affect loyalty to the League of Cambray, whilst negotiating secretly with Henry VIII for an alliance against Louis, permitting Julius to invest him with Naples in contempt of French claims, and warning Ramon de Cardona, his Viceroy in that country, to hold himself prepared for war. Under pretext of a war with the Moors, he told Cardona, he had 8,000 Spanish infantry under Pedro Navarro ready to be sent at a moment's notice to any place where their services might be required. In the meantime Cardona was 'to behave as though the greatest friendship prevailed between Ferdinand and the King of France'. It would be well, however, unobtrusively to take a few precautions, and more particularly to be on the watch for secret intelligence between the Neapolitans and the French and to send trusty agents to the Neapolitan frontiers, who, under the pretext of preventing the export of gold and prohibited merchandise, might search travellers for letters and papers and detain all ciphered documents.[1]

How would the new King of England shape his policy? His hands were free to shape it as he would, for his country had been excluded from the League of Cambray, and by the custom of the time his father's commitments to foreign powers were abrogated by the demise of the crown. He was high-spirited and ambitious, and, if he should wish to go to war, his father's treasure lay ready to his hand. Venice, when she appealed to him to intervene in her favour with the Emperor and the Pope, hoped to see him fall out with the King of France, and it was the general opinion that a quarrel was a thing by no means unlikely. Henry disapproved of the conspiracy against Venice, disliked the successes which it had brought to French arms, and feared lest a Venetian *débâcle* might react injuriously upon the economic interests of his country. He took it very ill, when in August 1509 an ambassador from France appeared at his Court and told him that he had come to confirm the peace, being sent in response to the English request for the maintenance of

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, p. 46.

the existing friendship. 'Who proffered such a request?' asked the King, turning wrathfully upon his councillors. 'Am I to request peace with the King of France, who could not resist me, if I were to attack him, let alone make war upon me?' Having thus spoken, he got up and would hear no more, treating the ambassador with marked discourtesy. It seemed clear to observers of the scene that King Henry was disposed to pay small attention to the French.[1]

Three months later Henry was still of the same mind, sending envoys to France and Spain and letters to the Pope in favour of the Venetians, and secretly sounding Ferdinand about the possibility of intervention. Resenting Henry's interference, Louis XII made a tart rejoinder, and in December the representative of the Signory in England was able to cheer his masters with comforting assurances about Henry's disposition. 'He is eighteen years of age,' said the envoy, 'liberal, warlike, and popular, has plenty of money, and is bent on a war with the King of the French, as he calls him, having himself assumed the title of King of France. On 1st December a proclamation was made that every man capable of bearing arms should join the colours by Candlemas, because the King intends to invade France, and has ships prepared for the purpose. The news of our recovery of Vicenza has been hailed with delight, and our merchants have received important fiscal concessions.'[2] The cautious Ferdinand, however, counselled delay, arguing that, as the Emperor had not been gained and the Pope was not ready, the time was not ripe for action. 'Secrecy and circumspection', he advised his hot-headed young friend, 'are always necessary in great enterprises. It would be very inconvenient, if the French were to know anything about our closer alliance, our plan to preserve to Venice the territories which belong to her by right, and other similar matters, before they are ripe for execution. The King of England must therefore henceforth write in his letters nothing but such things as the French may read without danger.' He shared Henry's opinion, he went on, about the danger of destroying Venice. He had therefore entered into secret negotiations with the Pope, to whom he had represented that, as the Church had

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. ix, col. 149.
[2] *Ibid.*, col. 439.

recovered all the territories which she claimed from the Venetians, he ought to enter into an alliance with Spain and England. These negotiations he meant to keep secret until he had won over Maximilian. Henry ought to treat with the Pope and the Emperor, not by ambassadors, but secretly, through agents travelling ostensibly for other purposes, it being most essential that France should not form so much as a suspicion of what was going on. Acknowledging that the answer which the King of France had made to Henry was extremely discourteous, he yet urged the prudence of showing no resentment. Let Henry attach no importance to the talk of a French attack upon England, for the French would not dare to attack her during his, Ferdinand's, lifetime, 'well knowing that he would immediately assist her, and that the result would be in favour of Spain and England, which two powers would despoil France of many of her provinces'.[1]

Their hopes raised high by the attitude which Henry had adopted, the King of Aragon and the Venetians were startled and alarmed when they learned that the young King had suddenly decided to renew the treaties with France which had expired with his father's death. The decision was procured by the influence of the councillors who favoured an Anglo-French *entente*, and who, if actuated primarily by a desire to receive the pensions which were the pleasant concomitants of that policy, could truthfully represent to their master that an alliance with Louis would secure peace in the Channel, restrain the warlike inclinations of the Scots, and guarantee the continued payment of the Étaples indemnity into the English Treasury. Writing to his masters from the French Court in December 1509, the Florentine envoy explained how the *rapprochement* had come about. The King of France, he said, was sending to England as ambassador a Maréchal des logis called Derisoles, who had often before visited that Court and was well known to the English Government, and the writer had it from Robertet that the object of the ambassador's visit was to confirm the existing alliance between the two countries. About six weeks ago the King of England had written a letter to King Louis in favour of the Venetians, and the tone of the letter had been rather sharp, the draft having been settled in the

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. 25–8.

English Council in the absence of several of the late King's advisers, who were favourable to France. Finding himself thus addressed, King Louis had replied in a similar strain, and when his answer was read in the English Council, those who had been absent on the former occasion had expressed their astonishment that the King of France should write in such a tone. Thus it had become necessary that the earlier English communication should be read out again, whereupon it had been decided to send a herald to France with a letter of excuses and regrets. The explanation of the first letter, perhaps, was that the Venetians or others had represented to the King that the Venetian war, by stopping trade with England, was inflicting a serious loss upon his realm, and he, with the impetuosity of youth, had written as he had. To prevent a repetition of such *contretemps*, the King of France was asked to send over an ambassador, and it was in response to this request that Derisoles was going.[1] As he took with him a sum of 50,000 *écus*, to be handed over as an instalment of the tribute, the friends of the Signory were forced to the painful conclusion that matters were made up between England and France, and that no more was likely to be heard of King Henry's preparations for Candlemas Day.[2] The conclusion was correct: on 23rd March 1510 Henry and Louis signed a treaty of peace, to endure for their joint lives and for one year thereafter.[3]

For the present, therefore, the Pope had failed to win the Emperor and the King of England, and had achieved no more than a halting success in his effort to win the King of Aragon; but nearer home he was on the way to a diplomatic triumph which would console him for these disappointments. The ten years' alliance between France and the Swiss Confederacy, which had been concluded in the year that followed Louis' accession, was timed to expire in the year of Agnadello. Neither side felt any eagerness for its renewal. The existence of the alliance had not prevented the disputes

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 454.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. ix, col. 544.

[3] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. xxx–xxxii; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, pp. x–xiv; H. A. L. Fisher, *History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of Henry VIII*, pp. 164–8; Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, p. 125.

with the Forest Cantons which had culminated in the fight for the possession of Bellinzona; and although that quarrel had been patched up in the Peace of Arona, it had left a legacy of bitterness in both countries. Like others who had taken the Swiss mercenaries into their pay, Louis had grown weary of their licence and greed, and the measures which he had taken before the Agnadello campaign to form a national infantry and to enlist German 'landsknechte' were evidence of his desire to get rid of the Swiss. After Agnadello, when Venice lay prostrate and the powers of Europe were in league with France, the time seemed to have come when that desire might safely be gratified, and Louis had discharged his Swiss mercenaries with a harsh contempt for their claims. Nor had he made any real attempt to renew the expiring alliance with the Cantons, for he did not intend, so he said, to be bled by a lot of miserable peasants, and the most that he would offer was a renewal of the alliance on the same terms as he had accorded ten years before. Already insulted in the persons of their cashiered legionaries, the Cantons felt themselves to be insulted again by these ungenerous offers. They believed that the victories which the French had won during the past fifteen years were due to Swiss prowess, and they knew quite well that their mercenary stock had risen sharply in the market where prices were governed by the competition of jealous rivals. Their discontent was augmented by an incipient reaction against militarism and a dawning apprehension of the dangers and humiliations in which the hireling system involved them. Though the commons might still be 'ready to follow any liberal recruiting officer',[1] the leaders were aware of the political, military, and economic perils inherent in a French domination in Italy, and saw that the time had come when the Confederacy ought to pursue a policy of its own.

The Pope perceived how he might profit by a conjuncture of circumstances eminently favourable to his designs. Julius had directed his gaze towards the Alps from the early days of his Pontificate, and, by drawing thence soldiers for the defence of his person and palace, had started the Swiss Guard upon its long and famous career. He now set himself to work upon Swiss dissatisfaction with France, and to win

[1] *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. i, p. 134.

over the Diet and Cantons to his own ends. His instrument was Matthius Schiner, Bishop of Sion, 'one of the most notable statesmen of his time and one of the greatest figures in the history of Switzerland'.[1] Born in the Valais about 1470, and educated at Berne, Zurich, and Como, Schiner had become Dean and Vicar-General of Sion under his uncle, Nicholas Schiner, and in 1499 had mounted the episcopal throne which Nicholas was induced to vacate. Beginning at once to take an active part in politics, and possessed of the energy and eloquence which induced Louis' successor to complain that a Valaisian priest had caused him more trouble than all the pikes of the Confederacy, he had speedily acquired a great influence in the counsels of his country, and that influence he had exerted consistently in opposition to France. In 1496 he had taken part in the expulsion of Bishop Jost of Silenen, a prominent supporter of French interests. A few years later he had championed the cause of Ludovic, and in 1503 he had represented the Cantons, when they imposed the treaty of Arona upon Louis XII. Since the accession of Julius he had been in close touch with the Papal Court, and in 1508 had been promoted to the Cardinalate. From the moment of his promotion he had acted as one of the chief instruments of Papal policy, whilst preserving an independence of spirit and firmness of will which prevented his becoming a mere tool in the hands of his imperious patron. Devotion to the Church, love of his country, and hatred of the French were his ruling passions, and all combined to designate him as the willing architect of the diplomatic structure which Julius desired to erect. In March 1510 his influence induced the Confederacy to enter into a five years' alliance with the Pope, whereby in return for an annual subsidy, spiritual protection, and diplomatic support from Rome, the Swiss undertook to protect the Pope and the Holy See, to supply 6,000 men on demand, if not themselves involved in war, and to abstain from all alliances of which the Pope might not approve. By this treaty the mercenary pikes so long a familiar and terrible feature of French armies were ranged beneath the standards of Louis' foes.[2]

[1] Oechsli, *History of Switzerland, 1499–1914*, Eng. trans., p. 32.

[2] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, p. 281; Pastor, *History*

Schiner had achieved his purpose with the Diet by representing the alliance as a defensive league, operative only in the event of an attack upon the Pope, and such an attack the Diet had regarded as a possibility so remote that it need not be taken into account. But Julius did not intend that the usefulness of the bargain should be limited by any such restriction. As soon as the treaty was signed, he ceased to conceal his anger with Louis, declaring in high and threatening language that that sovereign could never be his friend, and boasting that he would so use the Swiss mercenaries as to procure the liberation of Italy. His plan was to organize a surprise attack upon Louis' Italian possessions upon all sides at once: a Venetian fleet, aided by a land force of Italian adventurers and Genoese exiles, was to assail Genoa, which was expected to rise under the leadership of the Fregosi; the Venetian army was to make a bid for the recovery of the *terra firma*; and his own army was to invade the dominions of the Duke of Ferrara, who was under French protection. When involved in that warfare, he would summon the Swiss to aid him under the recent treaty; to reach him, they must essay to traverse Lombardy; the French would refuse them a passage; and they would then turn their arms against the Milanese. It was perhaps true, as he told the Florentine ambassadors in Rome, that his chief aim was to free Italy from French rule, but his plan promised subsidiary advantages, to which he was not indifferent, for as a Ligurian he resented the subjection of Genoa, and as Supreme Pontiff he longed to recover Ferrara, an ancient fief of the Church. He hated Alfonso of Ferrara as a recalcitrant vassal, as a friend of France, as the inveterate enemy of Venice, as a terror to the Papal States, as a rebel against the Pope's spiritual authority, and as a formidable competitor in the economic sphere. At Cervia in the Papal States there were important salt-works, for which Julius claimed a monopoly. At Comacchio, in Alfonso's dominions, this indispensable commodity could also be produced in great quantities, and Alfonso saw no reason why the Pope

of the Popes, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 324–6; Oechsli, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–3; Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, vol. v, part i, pp. 94–6; Kohler, 'Les Suisses dans les guerres d'Italie de 1506 à 1512', *Mémoires et documents publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève*, Series II, vol. iv, pp. 141–55.

should at one and the same time debar the people of Ferrara from a profitable industry and squeeze them by the sale of his own salt. Relying on French protection, he refused to obey, when Julius ordered him to shut down the Comacchio works and to desist from hostilities against Venice. Upon his refusal the Pope excommunicated him as a rebel against the Church, and declared him to have forfeited all his dignities and fiefs.[1]

As Julius well knew, an open rupture with Louis was a necessary consequence of his attitude towards the King's *protégé*. The exasperation of the French had been growing steadily since the beginning of the year, when the Pope had first shown signs of a disposition to reconcile himself with Venice and desert the League of Cambray. In March the Cardinal of Rouen took the Pope's ambassador to task for his master's unfriendly actions in precipitately removing the interdict against Venice, taking the Swiss into his pay, intriguing in Germany and England, and fomenting discontent in Genoa. The ambassador tried to explain these actions away, arguing that it was wiser to spare the Venetians, beaten and partly shorn as they were, than to ruin them entirely and make the Emperor powerful in Italy; but, as the representative of Florence told his Government, those excuses found no acceptance with the French, who held, and emphatically expressed, the view that the Pope was behaving very ill to the King.[2] In July Machiavelli wrote home from Blois to tell the Ten about the state of French feeling. 'Your Excellencies may surmise what is said here about the Pope. The withdrawal of obedience, the convening of a Council, the procuring of his ruin spiritually and temporally are the smallest of the evils with which he is threatened. . . . So much importance is attached by the King to the wound which the Pope has endeavoured to inflict upon him that I think it may be regarded as certain that he will go on till he has either obtained a complete revenge or lost all his Italian possessions. He is about to cross the mountains in much livelier style than in former years; and every one

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. x, cols. 583–4; Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 12–13; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, p. 282; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 327–8.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. x, cols. 103–4; Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques*, vol. ii, p. 485.

believes that, if, as appears likely, England and the Emperor stand firm, he will be able to accomplish more than he threatens'.[1]

The business of Florence, in a quarrel which menaced her with destruction, was to play the part of peacemaker, and Machiavelli had been sent to Louis to remove French suspicions, to counsel moderation and prudence, and, if he could not pacify the dispute, to secure at least that the Republic should be excused from taking sides. Louis was to be advised that, if he should wish to increase his power and renown in Italy, he must keep the Venetians down and remain on good terms with the Emperor, for with the Emperor content and the Venetians afflicted there would be nothing to fear from the Pope or the Spaniards, the former wanting good troops and the latter lacking an opportunity to attack. The King, Machiavelli was to tell him, ought also to do his utmost to ensure that the Pope should not be able to employ the Swiss, and he should strive to avoid an open rupture with His Holiness, 'for although a Pope's friendship may not be worth much, yet his enmity is dangerous by reason of his status as Head of the Church and of the fact that it is impossible to make direct war upon him without forfeiting the goodwill of all the world'.[2] So said the Florentine Signory, and the devout Queen, to whose opinion Louis was prone to defer, being strong upon the same side,[3] political apprehensions and conscientious scruples warred with resentment in the King's mind. But Julius, truculent, bellicose, and self-confident, gave him no choice but between a rupture and abject submission. In June Julius arrested one of the French Cardinals, who was preparing to leave Rome, put him in the castle of Sant' Angelo, and refused him the services of a chaplain on the ground that he had no chaplain with him when he tried to run away. The King's ambassadors, going to request the liberation of the imprisoned prelate, were denied an audience; and when the French Cardinals proffered the same request, presenting letters of

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 22–3, 26.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.

[3] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. x, col. 586, vol. xi, col. 113; *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, p. 300: 'la Regina di Franza cerca con ogni via ch'ella possa immaginarsi de rimovere il Re da questa impresa'.

remonstrance from their King, Julius flew into a passion and told them that they ought to be put in the castle along with their imprisoned colleague.[1] Hard on the heels of this incident there followed the affair of the investiture of Naples. When on 5th July the Pope in Consistory announced his intention of conferring the investiture upon Ferdinand, the French Cardinals demanded that at least their master's rights should be reserved; but Julius replied that Louis had forfeited the fief by alienating it without the permission of its overlord, by leaving its tribute unpaid, by sequestrating clerical incomes in France and Milan, and by taking under his protection the Duke of Ferrara, a vassal of the Church.[2] Finally, there came the excommunication of the Duke, accompanied by a threat by the Pope that the Duke's abettors, of what rank soever they might be, should be made partakers of his fate. On the eve of that day the French ambassador had once again visited the Pope in the company of the French Cardinals, to announce that the King had made an appointment to a vacant Archbishopric in France and to request the Pope's approval. Julius had refused; and when the ambassador had declared that in that event he had his master's orders to take his leave, the Pope had accepted his recall, not only without demur, but even with alacrity.[3] A week later copies of the bull of excommunication against the Duke of Ferrara were being distributed broadcast by the Pope, and in handing copies to the representatives of the Emperor and the King of Spain, Julius said: 'If the King of France be not careful, I will excommunicate him too.' The Cardinal of Saint-Malo warned him that he had better be careful what he did, for the King had 1,800 lances in Italy. 'I care not for him,' said the Pope, exalting the might of Venice.[4] The breach between France and Rome was complete.

In the new and momentous phase upon which his foreign policy was thus entering Louis would no longer have by his side the old and trusted friend who had advised him in many difficulties and supported him in many perils. For a long time past Georges d'Amboise had been in failing health, and since the close of the previous year the

1 Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. x, cols. 725–6, 856.
2 *Ibid.*, col. 746.
3 *Ibid.*, vol. xi, cols. 108–9.
4 *Ibid.*, cols. 188–9.

letters of ambassadors had contained repeated references to his numerous illnesses. In December 1509 the doctors had given up hope of his recovery.[1] On the 23rd of the following month the Florentine envoy wrote to tell the Gonfalonier that 'the Legate is prevented from transacting business by the state of his health—he has gravel or stone and cannot get rid of it—and his friends are worried about his frequent illnesses. In the space of a single year he has aged twenty years. . . . If he were to die or become permanently incapacitated, the affairs of this Court would fall into inextricable confusion.'[2] On 11th April the same writer sent word that d'Amboise was again ill with colic and gravel, and was believed to be never free from fever; his constitution being vigorous, there were hopes of his convalescence; but long and frequent illnesses gave rise to grave apprehensions.[3] The apprehensions were well founded. Within a month the patient suffered a serious relapse; on 23rd May his condition was critical; and on 25th May he was dead.

There is a tendency among modern writers to judge Georges d'Amboise with severity, and the most eminent are not the least outspoken in condemnation. For twelve years, says M. Henry Lemonnier, the Cardinal of Rouen had filled a great place alike in France and in Europe, but his policy had been radically unsound, and, when he died, he left France in a thoroughly unsafe position, with the Pope acting against her in all directions, Venice saved, Spain and Switzerland worse and worse disposed, England unfavourable, and Austria treacherous: such were the fruits of his achievement in the hour of the King's greatest success.[4] Another critic declares that, whilst the Cardinal was happy in his internal administration and was beloved and admired for his personal integrity and disinterestedness and for his cleverness in avoiding heavy taxation in a time of frequent wars, yet he showed no ability in his relations with foreign powers, and scarcely ever set his hand to a treaty that was not onerous to his

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. ix, cols. 412–14.

[2] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 460.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 491.

[4] M. Henry Lemonnier, in the *Histoire de France*, ed. Lavisse, vol. v, part i, pp. 93–4.

country.[1] Such criticisms seem to leave out of account the difficulties with which d'Amboise had been confronted. Louis' minister had been called upon to deal with an international situation of exceptional complexity and to make what he could of Maximilian's restless enmity, Ferdinand's duplicity and greed, the ambition of Venice, the jealousy of England, and the intemperate vehemence of the firebrand who wore the Triple Crown. It was true that he had failed to dominate the situation, as a really great statesman would have dominated it. It was true that he had failed to crush Venice after an overwhelming victory, failed to preserve the friendship of the Swiss, and failed to avert the dangerous enmity of the Pope. But it was not true that he had left France in a situation of great peril. He had left her politically supreme in northern Italy and with her military preeminence convincingly demonstrated on the field of Agnadello. He had left her so formidable that the prudent Ferdinand could not be lured from his neutrality even by the bait of Naples; that Maximilian thought it well to change his opposition for co-operation; and that, even when a young, high-spirited, and ambitious King mounted the throne of England, the ancient enemy yet sought a renewal of recent treaties of friendship. D'Amboise is not to be blamed, if all these advantages were lost after his death, for no man can say how differently things might have turned out, had he lived, or how far he might have saved his master from the weak and vacillating policy by which those advantages were thrown away.

Let modern critics say what they will, there was no doubt in the minds of contemporaries that France was visited by a heavy dispensation of Providence when mortal illness cut off the number of the Legate's days. The Florentine envoy, Nasi, hastened to express his conviction that those having business with the French Court would suffer a marked increase of vexation, for, as all had deferred to the Legate's authority so completely as to become wholly unaccustomed to express an opinion in Council, it seemed to him more than probable that the decisions of the Government would take on a certain air of extravagance. The want of the

[1] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. xcviii–xcix.

Legate's guiding hand was likely, he thought, to be especially felt in the affairs of Italy. The King was entrusting the conduct of business to M. de Boucicaut, to the Bishop of Paris [Étienne Poncher], to the Bailli of Amiens [Raoul de Lannoy], and to Robertet. The three first-named, being cold by nature, were most unlikely ever to take the initiative; nor were they of high birth; but they were considered to be the most reliable amongst those frequenting the Court. The Chancellor lost no opportunity to thrust himself forward, but in fact it was Robertet who had become the pivot of the Government; he was experienced, and had the wisdom born of experience; and, as the King saw through his eyes and heard through his ears, he could always get his own way. The Chancellor wished it to be thought that he was the ruling spirit, but he was lacking both in ability and in energy, and was unlikely to enjoy more authority than he had possessed before.[1] D'Amboise had been dead scarcely three months when Machiavelli, who had not loved him, began to assess the fatal consequences of his loss. The King, he said, was prone to temporize and to cheese-pare and to take it for granted that all would go well across the Alps as soon as he should cross them. To this cause were to be attributed the easily avoidable *contretemps* which had lately occurred, revealing the seriousness of the loss occasioned by the Legate's death, for in his lifetime things had never gone wrong in the same way. The fact was that the King, unaccustomed to trouble himself with the details of public business, was easily wearied by them, and those who had the management of affairs in their hands did not possess the necessary authority even to suggest what ought to be done, let alone to do it. Thus with a negligent physician and an incompetent nurse the patient was like to breathe his last. 'Today, as I was talking with Robertet, an artist came in with a portrait of the late Legate. Robertet gazed at it, and then said with a sigh: "Alas, my patron, if only you had lived, we should ere now have been in Rome at the head of our troops": and these words convinced me that I had formed a correct estimate of the new situation.'[2]

As Machiavelli was well aware, there were, indeed, good

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 503–4, 509, 515. [2] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 105–6.

reasons for Robertet's regrets. The Emperor's fiasco at Padua seemed to have taken all life out of the Italian campaign, and during the winter of 1509–10 the war against Venice had lapsed into a series of desultory and ineffective operations. In the spring of 1510 the Venetians had in the field an army of 600 men-at-arms, 4,000 light horse, and 8,000 infantry, based on Vicenza, which they had recovered at the close of the previous year, and led by Paolo Baglione, the successor of the Count of Pitigliano, who had recently died. This army threatened Verona, an insecurely held Imperial acquisition, and by the orders of Louis XII Chaumont and Trivulzio advanced to its relief at the head of 1,500 lances and 10,000 foot, whereupon the Venetians, inferior in numbers, fell back in disorder upon Vicenza. It was the intention of the Venetian leaders to make a stand in this place, and a proclamation was made that none should leave the city, seeing that the army would stay and defend it; but the order had scarcely gone forth when the leaders learned that Chaumont was advancing on Legnago, and fearing that he would be in Padua before them, they immediately fled on down the Padua road. Great was then the alarm in Vicenza, which found itself abandoned by its friends, and knew what it might expect from the mercy of an enemy whom it had exasperated by its recent revolt. The sack which followed was made memorable by the perpetration of one of those enormities which in this age so foully stained the escutcheon of Italy's barbarian invaders—enormities which sometimes were imposed upon the troops by a calculated policy of 'frightfulness', but more often, as on this occasion, were spontaneous ebullitions of their native ferocity. Some of the people of Vicenza and its environs had chosen for their place of refuge a labyrinth of narrow passages quarried by hewers of stone in the side of Monte Berico, and in this asylum many hundreds of fugitives were assembled with their wives, children, and valuables. A French captain of adventurers discovered the retreat, and after endeavouring in vain to force the narrow passage by which alone an entrance could be effected, conceived the diabolical plan of piling up faggots to windward of the passage, firing them, and so suffocating all within. Caught red-handed by the generous Bayard, some of those who assisted in the perpetra-

tion of the outrage were hanged by his orders on the scene of their misdeed; but the punishment of the guilty could not efface the memory of the crime.[1] After the fall of Vicenza and the occupation by the French of Legnago, Bassano, and a few smaller places the war against Venice was once more suspended, a grave menace to the safety of Milan and Genoa necessitating the recall of the bulk of the French forces.

This threat was the work of Julius, and caused no small alarm to the French Government; but notwithstanding the energy with which he pursued them, the Pope's plans were not in fact destined to meet with more than partial success. Just as he had secured the co-operation of one only among the four powers whom he had designed to bring in against the French, so now he had the mortification of seeing his triple attack upon the French possessions collapse in every quarter but one. The naval operations against Genoa, with which he began, were wholly ineffective. To pave the way for this enterprise, Julius had tried to induce Prégent de Bidoux to lead his galleys against the Barbary pirates, and Prégent had been on the point of putting to sea when recalled by the Governor of Genoa, who had received secret intelligence of the Pope's designs. The attacking fleet appeared off the Ligurian coast in the middle of July, and anchored in a sheltered bay not far from the town, upon which it was intended to deliver a night attack. Before this intention could be carried out, however, the ships were discovered by Prégent, who contrived with his usual fertility of tactical resource to dislodge them from their position, and, having done so, drove them before him in headlong flight as far as Elba. Six weeks passed before the defeated fleet, refitted and reinforced by Julius, ventured to return. When it did so, it once more encountered Prégent, who broke it up in an engagement of three hours' duration, captured four of its vessels, as they attempted to flee, and cleared the Genoese Riviera of hostile war-craft for the second and last time.[2]

[1] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 201–5; 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 206–8, 244–5; Cipolla, *Storia delle Signorie italiane*, vol. ii, p. 819. L. da Porto believed that the outrage was perpetrated, not by French troops, but by German.

[2] C. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol. iii, pp. 84–8.

Meanwhile the expected conflagration in Lombardy had also ended in smoke. Scarcely had the Swiss signed the convention which Schiner had foisted upon them, when Julius, claiming protection against the Duke of Ferrara, called for their stipulated contingent to be sent to his defence. 'Yesterday', wrote Schiner's agent in Rome on 15th August, 'I had a long audience of His Holiness. He is eager to hear that the Swiss infantry have crossed the Alps into Italy. But the matter requires careful handling. The Pope is asking for the Swiss for the defence of himself and the Papal States, but that is not really the purpose for which he requires them, his true object being the expulsion of the King of France from Italy; and if the Swiss do not move against Genoa or Milan, they will not serve His Holiness' turn, and you will not only waste your labour and lose your promised rewards, but will incur His Holiness' displeasure into the bargain.'[1] Schiner was in the difficulty that the Diet did not desire a war with France, and that great efforts were being made by Louis and Maximilian to dissuade them from complying with the Pope's demand, and he would perhaps have failed to achieve his object, if he had not been aided by the warlike temper of the people. Despite Royal warnings and Imperial threats, the 6,000 men for whom the Pope asked were assembled in August, and, being joined by volunteers, increased rapidly to a total of 8,000 or 10,000 men. They were ordered to divide into two columns, of which one was to march by the St. Bernard route and the other by the St. Gotthard. The first column traversed the Valais, crossed the St. Bernard, and halted near Ivrea. Disquieting news presently reached it there, for it was informed, first, that it would be refused a passage by the Duke of Savoy, and, secondly, that its companion force was in trouble near Bellinzona, where it had been defeated by the French and was in dire need of assistance. The leaders decided to hasten to its aid, and, returning with all speed through the Valais, reached Bellinzona on the last day of August, only to learn that the information on which they had acted was a hoax, and that the other column, continuing its advance according to plan, had left Bellinzona undisturbed a few days before.

[1] A. Büchi, *Kardinal Matthäus Schiner als Staatsman und Kirchenfürst*, vol. i, p. 99 (abridged).

They marched after it, and in a short time came up with it at Varese.

The other column had halted at this place to take stock of a situation which became daily more precarious, the further they advanced. Before them in the Castiglione plain lay Chaumont, who had hurriedly gathered as large an army as the denuded Milanese could muster, and who, unable to offer direct opposition to a superior force, had adopted the alternative defensive plan of doing everything possible to hamper their advance. Everywhere along their front they found that all the roads were barricaded, all the bridges broken down, all the mills and bakehouses destroyed, and all the provisions removed to the strong places. These measures were the more efficacious in that they had come ill provided with money and supplies, and were without cavalry, artillery, and pontoons. They had spent no more than a few days at Varese when the risk of scarcity compelled them to move, and they advanced on Castiglione, to seek a battle with the French. When Chaumont fell back before them and took up a position at Gallarate, to cover the Milan road, they turned eastwards and marched along the foot of the Alps. Pursued by Chaumont, harassed by a hostile population, and greatly vexed by the difficulty of their route, they came at length to a halt, and were told by their leaders, who were suspected of being bribed by Chaumont, that they had better give up the expedition and make for home. Whatever the motives of the leaders, their counsel commended itself to the judgement of the rank and file. Retreating by Como, Chiasso, and Ponte-Tresa, and pillaging as they went, they re-entered Bellinzona in the early days of September, delivering the French from a great peril and dealing a mortal blow to the hopes of Julius II.[1]

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 302–4; Kohler, 'Les Suisses dans les guerres d'Italie', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire de Genève*, Series II, vol. iv, pp. 176–87; Oechsli, *History of Switzerland*, Eng. trans., p. 34. 'The Swiss, who have already eaten up the Pope's ducats', wrote Maximilian to his daughter on 2nd September, 'are now hungry for the *écus* of France. We are the *chef* who dishes up these *écus* most appetizingly and in such a way that they will eat them greedily; for you must know that these Swiss are communities to whom faith and loyalty are unknown': Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 326–7.

From the reports of Machiavelli, who was on a mission to the French Court at this time, we may learn something of the effect which these events produced upon the minds of King Louis and his advisers. The King, wrote the great Florentine early in August, was vigorous in preparation and in provision. A Synod of the prelates of all the realm was summoned to meet at Orleans; the Duke of Würtemberg had been made a friend of, to secure German infantry and to bridle the Swiss; and the Captain of the Swiss Guard had been sent to his native country, to seek a reconciliation with the Cantons. The captains of all infantry regiments had been ordered to complete their complements, so as to be ready instantly for active service, and the ban and reban had been ordered out for home defence and as a support to the cavalry in case of need. The revenue officials had been warned to be ready with supplies, and had been told to raise money by new methods, so that the cost of the impending war might be met without making inroads upon the cash reserves. The Bishop of Gurk, the Emperor's chief adviser, was expected at the French Court, and the King hoped to arrange with him that the Emperor should be ready by the middle of February with as many men as he could muster. The King of Spain had written in the most friendly terms, condoling with Louis over the Papal attempt on Genoa, and offering the use of a dozen galleys for whatsoever purpose he might desire; and the letters were the more markedly favourable to the King in that they showed no sort of consideration for the Pope. The King for his own part had ordered that a new fleet should be got ready for the New Year, commensurate in size with the land forces.[1]

'The King', wrote Machiavelli a fortnight later, 'is not eager for war, but, if he be forced into it, he means it to be as decisive as any war that has ever been waged in Italy. His design is to temporize till the winter be over, and in the interval to make perfectly sure of England and the Emperor, to win whom he will spare no efforts. With them won over, he will feel no anxiety on the score of Spain, declaring that Ferdinand will hold the Castilian crown at his pleasure. Meanwhile this Gallican Council is convened, and many prelates have already come; they are preparing for the proceedings

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 46–7.

at Orleans, where the country will withdraw from obedience to the Pope; and then, if England and the Emperor concur, a new Pope will be elected. And in the spring the King will invade Italy with so powerful a force that the operations will be not so much a war as a promenade as far as Rome. . . . God grant a favourable issue and exorcise the evil spirit by which, as the French say, the Pope is possessed, lest he involve Florence in his own ruin—a ruin which, if only Your Excellencies were differently circumstanced, would not, indeed, be undesirable, that these priests might be taught a bitter lesson in this their temporal state![1]

'At the King's departure for Blois', wrote Machiavelli again on 5th September, 'the Papal envoy was given to understand that he need not follow, but might stay where he was or go where he liked; and he has decided to go to Avignon. This has greatly dislocated the negotiations with Rome, which had been conducted by him up to that time, and I fear that without him no good can come of them. I must not omit to tell you that there is thought to be some difficulty in the King going to Italy in person, and this for three reasons: first, a general refusal in France to submit to extraordinary taxation; secondly, a universal distaste among the gentlemen for an Italian expedition, the members of this class having lost life or fortune there on former occasions; and thirdly, the reluctance with which the Queen and the great lords would see the sovereign leave the kingdom and place his person in jeopardy. It is true, no doubt, that this same thing has been said for the last ten years, and that the King has nevertheless gone to and fro as much as he pleased; for the fact is that, when his mind is really set on a thing, every one else comes round to his view.'[2]

It would have been well for Louis had the burst of vigour which Machiavelli thought that he detected in him borne fruit in determined action. Louis, however, was pursuing two ends, and pursued neither with resolution. By means of the Gallican Synod, of which Machiavelli wrote, he carried the contest into the spiritual sphere, and there continued it by means of a Council of dissident Cardinals, who for one reason or another were willing to co-operate with

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, p. 71.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 114–15.

him against the Pope. The Synod and the Council made no small stir in Christendom, and call for a treatment more ample than can conveniently be accorded to them in the course of a narrative already drawn out by the requirements of its temporal theme. I propose, therefore, to reserve the spiritual contest for consideration in a separate chapter, having first carried the story of the temporal struggle to the point when it entered upon a new phase with the Pope's formation of a Holy League against the French.

The final failure of the naval expedition against Genoa and the retreat of the Swiss from the Milanese were events of the future, when Julius first took in hand his own part of his threefold scheme by dispatching his nephew, the Duke of Urbino, against the dominions of the Duke of Ferrara. The war began auspiciously for the Papal forces, Lugo and Bagnacavallo being conquered easily, and partisans of Julius opening the gates of Modena, left inadequately garrisoned by the non-arrival of the promised French reinforcements. Encouraged by the good news, Julius resolved to visit the theatre of war. He left Rome in the middle of August, and, after reviewing the fleet destined for Genoa, proceeded by easy stages to Bologna, which he reached on 22nd September. By that time, however, the effects of the Swiss withdrawal were beginning to be felt. Freed from anxiety on the side of the Alps, Chaumont was able to march southwards, and after a feint against Modena wheeled suddenly round and marched on Bologna. The Pope's situation was then critical: his army was small; it was rent by discords among its leaders; Bologna was ill supplied with provisions; the rule of the Pope's lieutenant, Cardinal Alidosi, had made the people rebellious; and Julius, whose energy and determination might have made amends for many defects, was prostrated by fever. Overcome by terror, the Papal Court implored Julius to save himself by negotiation or by flight. Sickness and the presence of French cavalry forbade flight. Julius began to negotiate, and must have ended by accepting Chaumont's terms, had not a relieving army appeared in the nick of time, depriving Chaumont of the chance to enforce his demands. Finding that Bologna did not rise, and harassed by lack of supplies and the inclemency of the weather, the French commander withdrew, pursued by Papal maledic-

tions. Contemporary opinion blamed him for imprudence in design and negligence in execution, and historians agree that in marching against the Pope without pressing home his attack he had done either too much or too little; but, as Guicciardini observed, the opinions of his critics would carry more weight, if one could know with certainty by what results a different line of conduct would have been attended.[1]

As the French drew off, the Papal troops joined hands with the relieving force at Modena, and the united armies then resumed the offensive which had been interrupted by Chaumont's approach. After capturing Concordia, they were sent in the last days of the year against Mirandola, which Julius was eager to secure, partly because he thought it the key to Ferrara, and partly because he was furious that Trivulzio's daughter, to whom it belonged, should have suffered it to be used as a French outpost. The Pope's men invested the city, but were much hampered in their siege operations by scarcity of supplies, by weather of exceptional severity, and by a murderous fire from the walls. Finding the siege languish, and attributing the delays to want of capacity or of loyalty in his generals, the Pope made up his mind to go in person to the front and see what his presence would do to infuse new vigour into the operations. Ignoring the protests of his *entourage*, he left Bologna on 2nd January 1511, and set his face towards the camp. As he journeyed, accident alone saved him from a misfortune which might have altered the course of history. In the neighbourhood of the district which his path traversed lay Chaumont's army, awaiting an opportunity to render aid to Mirandola, and in that army was Bayard, eager as ever to essay some daring deed. Spies brought him news that the Pope was on the way to Mirandola, his intention being to spend the night in a village near Concordia and proceed next morning to the Papal camp. His route would take him past a country house from which its occupants had fled by reason of the war, and Bayard conceived the audacious scheme of ambushing himself in the deserted building and pouncing out upon the Papal retinue, when it should go by. Proceeding upon his way, Julius reached the neighbouring village, slept there that night, and rising betimes next morning, as was his wont, ordered an

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, p. 322.

early start for his last day's march. No hint had come to him of the presence of French cavalry near by, and all unsuspectingly his retinue approached Bayard's hiding-place. Julius, however, was not with them, for a heavy snow-storm had come on as he rode from the village, and the Cardinal of Pavia had prevailed upon him to take shelter till the storm should have abated. To that accident, and to that alone, he owed his safety.[1]

The besieging army was at grips with a winter of unprecedented severity when Julius reached the camp. One eyewitness asserted that the snow of that month was the deepest ever known, and another, the Venetian, Lippomano, writing from the camp, said: 'It snows and snows and never stops snowing, and this will interfere with the siege; but the Pope's people are to blame, for they did nothing when the weather was fine, and now that the weather is bad, they have got to press on with the siege, because the Pope is in the camp.'[2] It snowed, said Bayard's biographer,[3] for quite six days and nights without cessation, with the result that the snow in the camp was on a level with a man's head, and when it stopped snowing, it froze so hard that the moat of Mirandola was frozen to a depth of fully two feet, and the ice did not break when a gun and gun-carriage fell on to it. Despite age and recent indisposition the Pope shared the discomforts and perils which his men were called upon to endure. He was out in all weathers, reviewing troops in the snow, inspecting the camp, directing the siege operations, speaking words of encouragement and advice; he wore armour, exposed himself to fire, and even lodged within range of the enemy guns; and when on 20th January the city, despairing of relief, agreed to surrender, he clambered over the ruined walls into the city which he had done so much to win.

Such was the siege of Mirandola, a siege of which Guicciardini remarked that the Pope's participation made it memorable for a thing not merely unexpected, but positively unprecedented in all the centuries that went before. For the impetuous ardour of Julius had overridden all considerations: he had not been restrained by the reflection that it was

[1] *Histoire de Bayart*, by the Loyal Serviteur, ed. J. Roman, pp. 222–7.
[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xi, cols. 730–1.
[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 228–9.

utterly unworthy of his office for a Pope to accompany armies against Christian places; he had not thought of the great danger which it involved; nor had he cared for the effect upon his reputation throughout the world, or for the apparent justification of those who were proclaiming his rule pernicious to the Church, denouncing the scandal of his incorrigible defects, and seeking to convene a Council and raise the Princes against him. And assuredly it was a novel and noteworthy thing that a King of France, a secular ruler, brought up in youth to arms, and still in the prime of life and health, should stay quietly at home, carrying on through his captains a war directed chiefly against himself, whilst the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth, old, infirm, and nurtured in pleasures and ease, went in person to a war stirred up by himself against Christians, exposed himself like any ordinary officer to peril and fatigue, and retained of his Papacy nothing but the trappings and the name.[1]

The fall of Mirandola was followed by a lull, which resulted in part from the Pope's departure for Bologna and in part from the incapacity of Chaumont, who was seized by the illness of which he was shortly to die. At the instigation of Ferdinand the Emperor availed himself of the respite to seek for a settlement of a quarrel by which he was disturbed. Ferdinand had been cautioning him against making Louis too powerful and telling him that his interest lay in a general peace: if he, Spain, France, and the Pope could be brought to discuss peace terms, he might be sure of getting what he wanted from Venice, which could not resist the decisions of the powers; and in the event of failure he could still resort to war, for which in such circumstances he could not be held responsible. Impressed by the reasoning, Maximilian proposed a conference of ambassadors; and his proposal was welcomed by the Pope, not because he desired peace, but because he hoped to arrange matters between Maximilian and the Venetians, and so leave the way clear for his projected league against the French.

Lang, Bishop of Gurk, the Emperor's chief adviser, came to Italy, and after conferring at Mantua with representatives of France and Spain, went on to Bologna, to meet the Pope. In all Europe it would have been difficult to find a negotiator

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 329–30.

less likely to conciliate the irascible Julius than this conceited, arrogant, and imperious prelate. He travelled with extreme pomp and magnificence, escorted by three hundred German horse, and accompanied by a large retinue of gentlemen sumptuously arrayed. Julius, eager to win him to his views, welcomed him with every mark of honour, receiving him in Consistory, and entertaining him at a state banquet. To these advances, however, the Bishop responded with repellent hauteur: he refused to stand or to uncover in the Pope's presence, declined to attend Mass in the Pope's chapel, rarely allowed himself to be seen in public, and seldom paid the Pope the compliment of a visit, though himself receiving daily visits from the Cardinal of Pavia, who came as the Pope's representative. Worse even than his insufferable manners were his outrageous demands, for he required that Venice should yield all that Maximilian had ever claimed, and insisted that the Pope should submit to a settlement of his differences with France and Ferrara. No long time was needed to make it plain that in the hands of such a negotiator the quest for peace must fail. Lang left Bologna after staying long enough to get himself detested by all who had met him, and the suspended hostilities were then resumed.[1]

The French took the field under a new leader, for Chaumont had died in March, 'having earned the reputation', as a Milanese chronicler said of him, 'of being liberal and high-spirited, but deficient in moderation and a lover of wine and women'.[2] His successor, Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, was probably his superior in purely military gifts and was unquestionably his superior in the qualities of energy and decision which seldom fail to influence the conduct of war. Entering upon his task with a vigour which Chaumont had never brought to it, Trivulzio recovered Concordia, and then advanced upon Bologna, taking with him a representative of the dispossessed House of Bentivoglio. The defence

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 333–49; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xii, cols. 147–8, 160. Lang, says Lehmann (*Das Pisaner Concil von 1511*, p. 11), was thought to have been corrupted by French gold, but in fact was acting correctly in his master's interests, and, if he put his demands high, was justified by the present situation of Maximilian, who was being courted by both sides at once.

[2] Prato, 'Storia di Milano', in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. iii, p. 282.

of the city was in the hands of the Papal Legate, Alidosi, and of the Pope's general, the Duke of Urbino. Alidosi hated his colleague, and knew himself to be hated, not only by the Duke, but also by a people whom he had alienated by his cruelty and greed. On the approach of the enemy he lost his nerve, and fled panic-stricken to Ravenna, whither Julius had already retreated. Thereupon the people opened the gates to the Bentivogli, and invited the French to advance. Meanwhile the contagion of alarm had spread to the army of the Duke of Urbino, which beat a precipitate retreat, losing the greater part of its guns, munitions, and baggage, and leaving to its fate the Venetian contingent, which it had summoned to its aid. When the Venetians approached the city in response to the Duke's appeal, they found the place resounding to cries of 'France! France!', and at the same moment were attacked by an insurgent peasantry, which had come down upon them in rear from the hills. The Provveditore lost his baggage, the paymaster his books, and the infantry, thrown into confusion, were roughly handled by the peasantry, who stripped many of them and then put them to death.

There is an epilogue to the story, and it may be told in the words of a correspondent of Isabella d'Este, who wrote to her about the state of feeling in Bologna at a time a few months subsequent to the events which I have narrated.[1] Whilst Julius was in Bologna, Michel Angelo had been sent for from Florence, and had been commissioned to cast a colossal bronze statue of the Pope, which was to be put up over the main door of the church of San Petronio. Isabella's correspondent wrote to tell her how this statue had been pulled down, all the citizens being for the Bentivogli, and there being not the slightest regard for the Holy Father even among the clergy themselves. 'Boys with knives hacked out the eyes, the head was severed from the body, and at night the torso was hauled about the market-place by the populace. In place of this statue they have put up a representation of God the Father, inscribed: "Know ye that the Lord he is God." This inscription is meant as a reproof to the Holy Father, who caused his statue to be placed above an image

[1] Letters of 14th and 19th January 1512 in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, p. 59 n.

of Our Lady, so that she with the Infant Jesus in her arms had thus the appearance of being at his feet.' Rather than return under Papal rule, he went on, the people of Bologna were willing to face all risks 'by reason of their utter detestation of the cruelty and tyranny of the Papal government. The miseries and injustices which they declare they have experienced under it are unbelievable, and for the honour of our religion they ought never to be mentioned. Decency forbids mention of the moral outrages of various kinds, for they are unspeakable, and I would to God that I had lost my hearing before ever I listened to such tales. Must not the upshot be that God, wearied and satiated by such excesses in his ministers, will refuse to suffer their rule to endure much longer?'

The rule of Julius would, perhaps, have already come to an end, had he been at grips with an enemy less scrupulous and more resolute than Louis XII. When he returned to Rome at the end of June 1511, his military power was broken, his resources were dissipated, and in Bologna he had lost one of the richest and most important cities of the Papal States. The way was open to his enemies to advance through his defenceless possessions, occupy his capital, and depose him from his Pontifical throne; and already at Rimini he had found affixed to the church door there a proclamation, bearing the names of nine Cardinals, which summoned a General Council to meet at Pisa on 1st September 1511. Whilst Italy waited in suspense to see what the King of France would do, Louis wavered and hesitated, doubtful of the moral propriety of pushing matters to an extremity against the Head of Christendom, and doubtful, if he were to do so, of the political consequences to himself. Finally, he decided to leave Bologna to the Bentivogli, evacuate the Papal States, and recall Trivulzio to the Milanese. His desire, he said, was to make peace with the Pope. But the Pope was in no pacific mood, for the King's vacillation had restored his courage. To gain time, he offered peace on impossible terms, but strove with renewed energy for the formation of an alliance against France, and replied to the threat of the Pisa Council by summoning a General Council of his own to meet at the Lateran in April 1512.

The league which he projected was to include Spain,

England, and Venice, and it was also to comprise the Emperor, if he could be won. Venice was already his ally, and he had good hopes both of Ferdinand and of Henry VIII. Ferdinand, having secured his own share of the spoil, had no wish for the Cambray League to continue to the increase of French power and prestige, and his policy now was to pose as a champion of the Church. So he told his ambassador to offer help in the recovery of Bologna, and he himself set to work to draw Henry into the orbit of his anti-French policy. Despite the word which he had lately pledged to Louis XII, Henry was disposed to listen to his counsel. He was jealous of French successes, and he was suspicious of the schismatic Council, for, if that movement were to succeed, Louis as its mainstay 'would become sole arbiter of the whole Christian world'. In this mood he agreed to enter into an alliance with Ferdinand which virtually abrogated his treaty of friendship with France, and showed himself ready to lend an attentive ear to the Spanish plea for a confederacy in defence of the Church. Ferdinand supplied his representative in England with reflections appropriate to the occasion; and although it would be rash to assume that this unscrupulous monarch really thought what he said, yet, since he expected Henry to believe it, we may learn something from his letter of the position which France occupied in the Europe of that day.

'The King of France', he wrote, 'intends this summer to send a very powerful army to Italy. The army is to be as numerous, or more numerous even, than that of last year, and the greater part of it has already entered Italy. Not a day passes without new troops passing the Italian frontiers, accompanied by the first personages of the French Court and of the kingdom of France. It is even said that the King intends to take the field in person. He is already on his way to Lyons, whence he intends to go by way of Grenoble to Italy. It is said that the objects he has in view are plainly recognizable, namely, to conquer and subjugate all that is remaining to the Venetians, to appropriate to himself Siena, and to obtain, by indirect means, possession of Ferrara and Mantua. The King of France has no right, and does not even pretend to have a right, to do any of these things, but he expects that it will be easy to carry out his plans, because

there is no prince in Christendom prepared to resist him. When the King of France has carried out these his first objects he intends to march to Rome, to dethrone the Pope, and to have another Pope of his own making elected. The plan of the King of France concerning the Pope is the following: If the Pope remains in Rome, the King of France will seize on his person, for appearance convoke a Council, although not a legal one, and have it decreed that the Pope is to be detained in prison and deprived of his dignity. When all that is done, the cardinals will be asked to elect another Pope. Some of the cardinals are already gained over by the French, and others, who are intimidated, will not dare to oppose them. As soon as the new Pope is elected the King of France will swear obedience to him, in order to give him greater authority. If, on the contrary, the Pope leaves Rome and takes flight, the King of France will proceed in the same manner as though he had taken him prisoner. Although some of the cardinals may accompany the Pope, the French are persuaded that the greater part of them will come to Rome when the King of France calls for them.

'Such Frenchmen as take part in the government of their country do not conceal their opinion that, if the King of France renders himself spiritual and temporal lord of Italy in the manner described, no resistance to him will be possible in Christendom. The same spirit is visible in all other public affairs. The King of France, a very short time ago, concluded a new treaty of friendship with the Pope, in which it is stipulated that the French shall not advance in Italy further than Reggio. Lately, however, the King of France sent to tell the Pope that he will not observe this stipulation, and that he intends to march his army to Siena, a city which is near Rome. Thus the intention of the French to go to Rome is quite clear. The Pope is in despair. The King of France, who has already recovered every inch of land in Italy to which he has any pretension, says that he is going with his powerful army to assist the Emperor, to whom he will deliver all the places that he conquers. But the King of France also says that he does not intend to carry on the war in the same way as the Emperor; his army is to act quite independently and separately from that of the Emperor. The King of France has entered into negotiations with the

wife of the Marquis of Mantua, and has asked her permission to garrison Mantua, telling her that the city would not be safe without a French garrison. He is likewise negotiating with the Florentines. The King of France has asked them for assistance in his Siena enterprise, promising in return to restore to them one or two castles in the Sienese territory on which the Florentines pretend to have some lawful claims.

'The French are treating, at the same time, more briskly than ever with certain cardinals, in order to gain their votes for the intended election of the new Pope. They are trying to create enmity between the Emperor and the Pope, with the object of making the Emperor assist the King of France in making a new Pope. The measures which the French employ for this purpose are to promise the Emperor to recover for him all the imperial cities which are held by the Venetians. They also tell him they will help him to go to Rome, to be crowned there. It is said the French are persuaded that the Emperor will be forced by sheer necessity to do their bidding, as, without their assistance, he cannot recover his cities from the Venetians, or go to Rome for his coronation. Even if the Emperor should not do the bidding of the King of France, the French say they will carry out their plans without and against him.

'All this is clearly very prejudicial to all Christian princes, and places them in a most dangerous position. It is therefore necessary that they should concert together the measures they intend to take against the French. The French are already beginning to execute their plans. As they are always very quick in the execution of what they undertake, it is of the greatest importance that the resistance to be offered to them should be speedily organized. The principal means of resistance to the French is the intimate alliance between him (King Ferdinand) and the King of England, his son. If, when this despatch arrives, the new treaty of a more intimate alliance with England is not concluded, he [the ambassador] is not to mention a word of the French designs either to the King or to his advisers, for if they knew them they would think that he (King Ferdinand) is in great want of their assistance, and so would defer the conclusion of the alliance. Nevertheless he is to employ all the means in his power to conclude the treaty of alliance as soon as possible.

'When that is done, he is to speak to the King of England in secret, and to communicate to him all the designs of the French mentioned in this despatch. He is to explain to him how much the French are endangering and injuring all the princes of Christendom, and how necessary it is to concert measures of resistance against them. If the King of England proposes of his own free will measures which will be effectual to stop the encroachments of the French, he is to do nothing but to praise the King and to encourage him. If, however, the King of England does not propose such measures, he is to speak to him about them, and to tell him that the intimate alliance between them, although very necessary, is not all that ought to be done. It is also, he is to say, their indispensable duty to gain over the Emperor to their cause. In this way alone can the princes of Christendom, and especially the King of England, be preserved from the serious dangers with which the French threaten all of them. He is to enlarge much on the precarious state in which England would be placed if the French were to carry out their plans. A further measure, which must be taken by him (King Ferdinand) and the King of England without delay, consists in persuading the Pope to reconcile himself with the Emperor, and to enter their alliance. When England, Spain, the Emperor, and the Pope are all united in this way against France, they will be better enabled to find means for putting down the arrogance and the tyranny of the French.'[1]

For the moment nothing could be arranged with Maximilian, whose troops were fighting side by side with those of Louis in northern Italy, and who stood committed to the support of the Pisa Council; but the other powers were agreed, and on 4th October the Holy League between Julius, Spain, and Venice was signed in Rome. The professed object of the league was the recovery of Bologna and of other places wrested from the Church; but its true aim was the destruction of French power in Italy. Ferdinand's forces were to co-operate with those of the Pope in an attack on Bologna from the south, whilst Venice attacked from the north, and any who might offer opposition were to be excommunicated. In November England gave in her adherence, and also put her name to a separate compact with Spain for a joint

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. 49–51.

invasion of Guyenne. The document recited that the King of France had often been requested to restore the towns taken from the Pope and to renounce the heretical Council, but had rejected all offers. A treaty for the defence of the Church had therefore become requisite, and, as it was difficult for Henry to send an army to Italy, he had agreed to co-operate with Ferdinand in attacking France across the Pyrenees. Each sovereign would send 6,000 men; each would keep a fleet at sea for a period of six months; neither would make a separate peace; and both would favour the Lateran Council and oppose with all their might the heretical Council of Pisa.

Such was the Holy League, a confederacy, as Guicciardini said of it, which was designed by Julius to free Italy of the barbarians, but which, in the view of more far-sighted judges, seemed likely to do Italy more harm than good. For it was audacious to hope that the conqueror could be expelled by Italian troops, without courage, discipline, good leadership, or real unanimity of aim; and a new war was much more likely to expose Italy to the depredations of new foreigners than to rid her of the old. It was to have been wished that quarrels among Italian Princes had never opened the way to the foreign invader; but since the Kings of France and of Spain had occupied portions of her territory, it was better that both should remain than that they should engage in a conflict which must expose Italy to new horrors in the immediate future and in the end to a yet more terrible oppression at the victor's hands.[1]

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, p. 382.

XXIV

THE COUNCIL OF PISA

If we would understand the story upon which we are now to enter, we should begin by seeking to gain some knowledge of the relations between the Papacy and the French Crown and some insight into French opinion in the sphere of ecclesiastical politics; and I know of no one better qualified to guide our footsteps in such a quest than the learned and brilliant author of *Les origines de la Réforme*.[1] The great fact of fifteenth-century history, says this writer, is the combat between the theoretic and the national systems, the break-up of the social and religious régime upon which Europe had been organized. The Conciliar movement, which had been the first symptom of the crisis, had aimed at making the universal Church a federation of national Churches. That movement had failed, and in the reaction which followed upon its defeat the Papacy had made a sustained endeavour to extend its control over the national Churches. But before that end could be achieved, the struggle had assumed a new aspect with the rise of national States, in which the civil power desired supremacy in the spiritual as in the temporal sphere. At the end of the fifteenth century new theories of sovereignty everywhere prevailed, and everywhere these theories were inimical to Papal pretensions. Aspiring to gain control of the national Church, the Pope found that in every State a new power, the Government, was interposed between that Church and himself, and was soon taught that he could act only within the limits which the Government allowed. Thus in the fiscal sphere he was confronted by the doctrine that it is for the King alone to tax, or authorize taxation of, his subjects, and experience demonstrated that Rome was dependent on the King's favour for the receipt of revenues drawn from the King's dominions. In a quarrel with Rome no weapon was so easily handled as the fiscal, and none was so effective, for it was within the power of an absolute monarch to throw the whole fiscal system of the Church out of gear. Louis XI had had recourse to the expedient in a

[1] P. Imbart de la Tour, *Le sorigines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, *passim*, and especially pp. 4–5, 34–5, 61–5, 74–91, 107–25.

quarrel with Sixtus IV. Louis XII would profit by the example in his struggle with Julius II, when for two years Rome would be deprived of all its French resources, and the revenue of the Apostolic Chamber would fall by fully a third.

The spirit of opposition to the Papacy was not confined to France, 'for Gallicanism was not merely a French doctrine; it was a European fact': but in France, where nationalism was especially strong, the general tendency was manifested with peculiar intensity. France had played an important part in the Conciliar movement, and in the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges she had regulated the internal régime of her Church without permitting the intervention, or requesting the sanction, of Rome. Asserting the separation of the spiritual and the temporal powers, Gallicanism had long proclaimed that the King of France held of none but God and acknowledged no superior in the temporal sphere. From this it followed that his civil power was absolute, that all, even Churchmen, must render obedience, and that none, not even the Pope, might impugn his acts.

On the common basis of this doctrine two sorts of Gallicanism had arisen, the theological and the juridical, the first the product of the Universities, the second the work of the Parlements. Theological Gallicanism conceded to the Papacy its divine institution and its universal primacy, but denied its claim to the possession of supreme sovereignty. 'If the Pope belongs to, and forms part of, the Church, then the body which represents the Church, that is, the General Council, must be above the Pope. It is undoubtedly proper that a General Council should be convened by the Pope, but in case of urgency or in the event of his refusal it may meet as of right. When once it has met, it is legitimate, even if the Pope be absent, for it derives its powers from Christ, and, being legitimate, it is supreme. "It is superior in authority, superior in dignity, superior in functions. . . . To such a Council the Pope must render entire obedience; it may limit his powers and abolish his rights; and from its decisions there is no appeal." The Council may suspend or depose the Pope, and in certain circumstances it may elect a Pope. The Pope may not prorogue it, nor dissolve it, nor annul its acts. Its constitutions possess of themselves the force of laws, and the

Pope's approbation is not necessary to their validity.'[1] The canons of Councils constitute the public law of the Church, and by that law the Pope is bound. In so far as they are contrary to these canons, all his measures are null and void, and may be resisted with impunity. Whilst there can be no appeal from a Council, from a Pope there is always an appeal, either to the Pope better informed or to a General Council. Finally, the primacy of the Pope gives him no arbitrary powers over the liberties of particular Churches, and such liberties are possessed in an especial degree by the Gallican Church, which is entitled to administrative liberty, or the right to elect her own chiefs and deliberate in her own Synods, to fiscal liberty, or the right to impose her own taxation, and to judicial liberty, or the right to sit in judgement on her own members. Such were the principles asserted by theological Gallicanism, and these principles were supported by the Gallican jurists, whose object was to uphold the absolutism of the Crown against Papal interference and encroachment.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, the pure theory of Gallicanism had in practice undergone successive modifications. The political influence of the Papacy had waxed, as its religious influence waned, and in the struggle between Roman centralization and local ecclesiastical liberties the King had often acted as the Pope's ally. In the first place, the power and prestige of the Holy See, of which he feared the operation at home and among his subjects, were often useful to the King abroad and against his enemies. In the second place, the Pope's concurrence had sometimes been necessary to the progress of absolutism. In the third place, the King and the Pope had been brought together by a dislike of liberty instinctive with both and by a common opposition to the liberal cause. Thus it had become the policy of the Crown to preserve the weapon of Gallicanism in its armoury, but to restrain its use, and in that policy it had been aided by the want of uniformity and of unanimity which characterized the national Church. That Church had never been wholly pervaded by the Gallican spirit. In Brittany, which had declined to recognize the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges and had since resisted all

[1] P. Imbart de la Tour, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

attempts at fusion, the Gallican doctrines had found no acceptance. In France itself they were opposed by many distinguished Churchmen, and were disliked by an episcopate which looked to the King and the Pope to augment its powers and multiply its rewards. Even in the two great centres of Gallicanism, the University and the Parlement, the spirit of opposition had decayed, 'and at the beginning of the sixteenth century there was no longer in France any real opposition to Rome'.[1]

Whilst Gallicanism was thus no longer potent to animate the French Church against Rome, the nation at large was little disposed to embrace an anti-Papal policy. For one reason or another all classes had grown weary of Italian entanglements. In Charles VIII's time the opportunity to go campaigning had been embraced by the gentry in a light-hearted spirit of adventure; but the adventure had lost the glamour of novelty; the class had learned by experience what war cost in absences and hardships, in lives and money; and, as more than one observer testified, nothing was so distasteful to the gentlemen about the King as the prospect of being ordered back to Italy. The views of the middle classes were governed by their perception of the economic reactions of foreign affairs; and despite the solicitude of the King and his minister to avoid extraordinary taxation, they knew that any grave international dispute must be accompanied by a bill, which they would be required to pay.[2] Moreover, throughout the nation, from the Queen to the peasant, there were men and women genuinely shocked by the thought of antagonism to the Head of the Church—thoughtful people, some of them, who had weighed the Gallican doctrine and found it wanting, but for the most part devout and simple souls, ignorant alike of doctrine and of politics, of the true nature of their sovereign's quarrel, and of the true character of the Pontiff, whom they superstitiously revered.

To instruct and mould public opinion was therefore an essential preliminary to a contest with the Papacy; but the instruction of the ignorant, which is never easy, was doubly

[1] P. Imbart de la Tour, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[2] As, indeed, they were, for the *taille*, which in 1508 stood at 1,500,000 *l.t.*, rose, with supplements, to double that amount in 1512 and treble that amount in 1513.

hard in an age when the newspaper was unknown and in a country in which representative institutions played no effective part in the national life. For purposes of propaganda the Government were restricted to the political pamphlet and the popular play. Amongst a people for the most part illiterate the pamphlet could not in the nature of things exert an extensive influence, and, in its direct appeal at all events, it could affect only those who stood in least need of instruction. The possibilities of the play were greater, for play-going was a favourite recreation of the masses, and the capacity of the play to mould opinion depended mainly upon the ability of the playwright to turn his opportunity to account.

In this connexion Louis was trebly fortunate in the existence of a society organized for the production of plays, in his previous relations with that society, and in the circumstance that the production of the society's plays was then in the hands of a playwright admirably qualified by his opinions and his abilities to further the King's cause in his quarrel with Rome. During the Hundred Years' War a band of young men, who combined a love of learning with a love of pleasure, had founded a society, which they called The Follies, to amuse themselves by making fun of the faults and foibles of mankind. The Follies were immensely popular with the light-hearted and pleasure-loving populace of the capital. Paris made holiday every year on the festival of All Fools, to watch the solemn entry of the society's president, habited in the traditional garb of the fool, and followed by the turbulent company of his merry men; and huge audiences were attracted to the farces which the Follies performed at frequent intervals. To the authors of these farces Louis had allowed an astonishing latitude, either because he feared their hostility and desired to placate them, or because, as he himself said, he could learn from their untrammelled utterances what were the desires and the needs of his people. I have had occasion to notice on an earlier page the manner in which these players had loosed the shafts of their wit indiscriminately against all the chief actors in the tragedy of Gié's downfall; and that was but one instance among many of the freedom which they enjoyed, but one among many proofs of their political privileges.

In the reign of Louis XI there lived in the town of Caen a lawyer called Gringore, bringing up a growing family on the modest competence which rewarded the labours of a small country attorney. To him was born in the middle of the reign a son, to whom his parents gave the name of Pierre, and upon whom fortune in an impish mood conferred an endowment of her choicest gifts. At the prompting of an adventurous spirit or under the compulsion of domestic penury Pierre left home in early manhood to go for a soldier, and, after experiences of which little is known, drifted to Paris and settled down to live upon his wits. Here he soon joined the company of the Follies, and in that congenial society rose speedily to a position of authority, which made him a political power of considerable weight. At the time of the Julian controversy he filled the second place in the society, with the official title of 'Mère Sotte', and in that capacity was responsible for the production of the society's dramatic representations, which came in large measure from his own pen. A man of some forty-three years of age, he was then in the plenitude of his powers, and those powers were of no ordinary kind. In an age of affectation, pretentiousness, and obscurity he was simple, natural, and pellucid; his productions were remarkable for realism and reasonableness, vivacity and verve, shrewd observation and critical acumen; and his force as a political propagandist was enhanced by the fearless plainness of his speech, the fire of his invective, and the pungency of his caustic wit. Criticism assigns to him a place second only to that of Villon among the poets to whom mediaeval France gave birth.

It is not possible to say whether Gringore had been approached by the Government or whether he voluntarily espoused a cause of which he approved, when he took up the cudgels in the King's defence. It may be considered probable that his advocacy was inspired by some sort of understanding with the King, but, even if that were so, it would still be certain that Gringore was giving expression to his own convictions, for his independent spirit would never have stooped to wield a merely mercenary pen. A loyal subject and a good citizen, he was yet animated by the spirit of the liberal middle class, which never feared to castigate errors and denounce abuses. A dutiful son of the Church,

he was yet alive to the faults and failings of clerical dignitaries, and represented the Gallican standpoint in religious affairs. No pressure would be required to induce him to undertake the congenial task of directing public opinion in the interests of the King. To accomplish that task successfully, he had to overcome the moral scruples of those who thought that there must be something wicked in a war with the Pope and the selfish fears of those who would rather see the King beaten than pay to give him the victory. To this task he addressed himself with the conviction of a Gallican, the enthusiasm of a patriot, and an unerring insight into the instincts and prejudices of the people.[1]

Before Gringore entered the lists, other writers had already been set in motion by the Government, and had drawn pictures of Julius, in which they contrasted the ideal of a humble and gentle pastor with the ugly reality of a fierce and greedy worldling arming himself for battle at the dictates of a vaulting ambition. Gringore began his attack with a piece entitled 'La Chasse du Cerf des Cerfs'. In this piece the Cerf des Cerfs (Julius, who professed to be the *servus servorum Dei*) is represented as the confederate of the Cerfs ruraux (the Swiss) and the Cerfs marins (the Venetians); pursued by the Francs Veneurs (the French), he is constrained to flee from his forest (Bologna) after a vain pretence of illness; and then he is in grave danger of being driven out altogether by a fine assembly which will meet in the new season (the Council of Pisa). The attack thus begun was continued in 'L'Espoir de la Paix', of which the thesis is that, the Papacy being corrupted by riches and temporal power, it has become the bounden duty of the King of France to protect the Church. A Pope, says Gringore in this piece, should be a good shepherd, ruling by peaceful means, and in the past there have been Popes who knew how to die a martyr's death; but there is nothing of the good shepherd about Julius, who is simply a devouring wolf; and the Church must pronounce between a firebrand who has come in by simony and maintains himself by violence and the King whose object is to rid her of that infliction. But these were preliminary skirmishes, and it was in 'Le Jeu du Prince des

[1] Gringore, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Ch. d'Héricault and A. de Montaiglon; E. Badel, *Pierre Gringoire*; C. Oulmont, *Pierre Gringore*.

Sotz', played in Les Halles on Shrove-Tuesday, 23rd February 1512, that Gringore unmasked his heavy guns.

'Le Jeu du Prince des Sotz' has been pronounced by one critic to be 'the most eloquent and persuasive of all the sixteenth-century dramatic pieces inspired by contemporary politics',[1] and by another to be 'the *chef-d'œuvre* of mediaeval dramatic art'.[2] 'Without all that was involved by a mystery play, without too many actors or too much scenery and display, the poet wields a considerable force akin to that of the press in modern society. He knows how to economise this force, and whilst performing an invaluable service as Louis XII's mouthpiece, he is at the same time wholly personal and entirely sincere. The simplicity of his thesis saves him from excess; but he courageously enlarges the area of the discussion and gives it a universal application. He influences public opinion, and the people and the *bourgeoisie*, who are sincerely Catholic, together with a portion of the clergy as well, are rallied to the Royal cause. He sets at rest many scruples, and those who laugh at Mère Sotte, after having their laugh out, are converted by the poet's good sense. . . . When the piece comes to an end the audience is convinced, or at any rate ought to be, for the poet has carried out his work with a skill which embraces the most minute details. To win over the people, Gringore shows the goodness and kindness of Louis XII, the gentleness of his government, the high spirits and good humour of his subjects. That with such a Prince they ought to be happy is the natural conclusion. But Sotte Commune corrects this idea; no, the people are not happy, and everything goes wrong. She cannot explain the cause, but is certain of the fact. It is explained to her that the Church is responsible for all the trouble, the hypocrite of treacherous endearments, who bites as she caresses. 'Tis she who desires war, and the people, who suffer by war, ought to hate the Church, or, rather, the Head who disgraces her. . . . The Pope avows that he perverts the truth, punishes the innocent, and loves simony, good cheer, and strong drink; and he admits that he will spare neither ruse nor treason to get his way in the end.'[3]

From this brief analysis of the state of religious opinion in

[1] C. Oulmont, *op. cit.*, p. 271.
[2] E. Badel, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[3] C. Oulmont, *op. cit.*, pp. 272–3, 286, 289.

France I turn to the actual story of the ecclesiastical dispute. Of the importance of opinion in such a dispute the King was well aware, and, when he found that he was heading for an open rupture with the Holy See, his first care was to seek for moral support from his prelates, theologians, and jurists. By letters patent of 30th July 1510 an assembly of these persons was summoned to meet at Orleans in September, the letters being accompanied by a manifesto in which the King denounced the Pope's disloyal and provocative policy and forbade his subjects to send money to Rome or to request preferment from the Pope. In accordance with his bidding a Synod met in the middle of September, not at Orleans, as originally ordered, but at Tours, which had later been designated as the place of meeting; it consisted of five archbishops, fifty-five bishops, fifty doctors of theology from the University of Paris, deputations from four other Universities, and delegations from the Parlement of Paris and three provincial Parlements. On 15th September, the King not being come, the session opened under the presidency of the Chancellor, and a list of questions was submitted, upon which the Synod was invited to pronounce. May a Pope declare war upon a Christian Prince, when his patrimony is not endangered and no question of faith is involved? May a Prince, when so attacked, defend his possessions? May he withdraw his obedience? If so, what steps should be taken for the internal government of the national Church? May a Prince go to the aid of an ally unjustly attacked by the Pope? In a dispute concerning the patrimony, may a Pope attack a Christian Prince who demands arbitration? When a Prince defends himself, and a Pope refuses arbitration and levies war, what is the worth of Papal censures? Such were the matters upon which the Synod was requested to deliberate, but before it could enter upon its duties, there was a second session, presided over by the King, who had just reached Tours. Acting as his master's mouthpiece, the Chancellor in an able, moderate, and tactful speech set himself to influence the assembly and to indicate the advice which Louis desired to receive. Louis, he said, had no wish to forsake the traditional policy of the Crown or to embark upon any course unjustified by the necessity of self-defence. The Pope was the aggressor. To serve the Pope's ends, a

league had been formed at Cambray, and the Pope had broken it. The Pope had attacked the King's Italian possessions. He had instigated the King of England, who was reconciled with France, to claim the French Crown. He had refused to accept any reasonable settlement of the question of presentation to benefices, and had presented candidates who were unacceptable to the King. He was impoverishing the kingdom by his excessive fiscal demands. The matters submitted to the Synod were urgent, and would brook no delay.[1]

With this appeal ringing in its ears the assembly then addressed itself to the problems which had been laid before it, and not without difficulty reached a collective solution likely to be agreeable to the Government. The Synod pronounced that a Prince who is attacked by a Pope may defend himself with arms, may invade Papal territory, and may withdraw his obedience; that he may defend his allies against Papal aggression; and that in the circumstances predicated he may treat Papal censures as null and void. To this pronouncement a rider was, however, added, which somewhat qualified the value of the verdict, for the King was told that, before any further measures were taken, the Pope should be admonished to desist from his courses and to convene a General Council, it being only in the event of a Pope's persistent obduracy that a Council could properly be summoned by the Princes. After voting a gift of 240,000 *l.t.*, the Synod then adjourned until the following spring.

The Synod had met at Tours at the time when Julius was embarking upon the Ferrara war, and at that time five Cardinals, who were personal enemies of Julius or mere creatures of Louis, fled from the Papal Court and took refuge in Lombardy. In these refugees Louis had ready to his hand the nucleus of an ecclesiastical opposition to the Pope. In conjunction with the Emperor, with whom he was on cordial terms, having just renewed the existing alliance, Louis approached the dissident Cardinals, and the last weeks of the year were filled with an active correspondence between Cardinals, Emperor, and King. By the end of January 1511 matters had reached a stage at which it was possible to announce to Florence that a Council would be held. Before proceeding

[1] Imbart de la Tour, *Les origines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, pp. 131–5.

further, however, it was thought well to obtain from Julius a formal declaration of his unwillingness either himself to summon a Council or to take part in a Council summoned by others, and a messenger was sent to him to remind him that at the time of his election he had promised to summon a Council, to call his attention to his omission to perform his vow, and to warn him that, if he did not call a Council at once, he would be regarded as having lost the right to summon it and preside over its sessions. Julius replied that he was not going to take orders from the Princes in such a matter, but would do spontaneously what his conscience and the interest of the Church might require.

This was in February 1511, when events were moving towards the Bologna negotiations between Julius and Lang, and these negotiations led to a brief truce in the religious, as in the military, war. When the peace effort broke down the struggle was resumed, and the Synod of Tours, which had adjourned till the spring, met again at Lyons in April, to pass measures of reform and to recall the decrees by which the Council of Constance had enjoined periodical Councils. A month later, on 16th May, the dissident Cardinals, with the concurrence of the Emperor and the King of France, issued a formal invitation to a General Council, which they requested the Pope to recognize and attend.

'The Christian Commonwealth', said the act of convocation, 'has derived much good from General Councils of the Universal Church, and has suffered much harm by their intermission, and at present there is urgent need that a Council should be summoned to establish true peace among Christians, to ordain a war against the Infidel, to restore the good customs of the Universal Church, for the most part ruined in Head and members, and to amend the great, horrible, and detestable wickednesses and notorious grievous sins by which the Church Universal is scandalized and brought into contempt. For such wickednesses and sins the Church has known and ordained but one salutary remedy, namely, the congregation of a universal Council; but the period of ten years, ordained by the Council of Constance, is long past since the last General Council was held, and Pope Julius, upon whom the responsibility for convening such a Council chiefly rests, does not produce this useful and necessary

effect, but has failed gravely therein; and in that at his election he solemnly vowed and promised to hold such a Council every ten years, he has not only omitted negligently to obey the injunctions of the Church, but has also been untrue to his own solemn vow and promise; for he has never called a Council, as was necessary and proper; nor can we believe that a Council will ever be called by him of his own free will.

'When great scandals in the Head fall to be dealt with, then according to the ordinances and constitutions of the Fathers and the decrees of the Council of Constance the convening of a Council appertains, not to the Pope, but to such of the Cardinals as have not participated in his misdeeds. Therefore in our zeal for and love of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, whom we have invoked, and seeking and striving instantly for the reformation of the Church in Head and members, we of our own free will, in the name of the Sacred College, which in this matter we lawfully represent, and in our own names and the names of the Cardinals whose mandate we hold and of all the Cardinals our adherents, and with the counsel and consent of the most sacred Maximilian, Roman Emperor elect, ever August, and of the Most Christian King Louis, King of France and Duke of Milan, and of all others being or desiring to be our adherents, call and convene a General Council of the Universal Church, and, so far as we effectually may, summon and invite such a Council to meet in the city of Pisa on the first day of September next, there to continue until the aforesaid objects be attained, unless to the majority of those intending to take part it should for some lawful cause appear desirable to select some other place of meeting.

'With all humility, reverence, and earnestness we implore our Lord Pontiff, Julius II, and entreat him by God's mercy, to concur in this convocation of a Council for the causes aforesaid and personally and by his Legates to honour and confirm the same; and similarly we summon and invite the most reverend Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, the Patriarchs, Archbishops, Kings, Princes, cities, Universities, doctors and masters of religion, and all prelates who have a title to participate in a General Council or by custom are wont and bound to attend the same, to come in their own

persons or by their solemn envoys and proctors, doing all that in them lies to ensure that the Council may be safe and free, and that it may proceed according to the decrees of Constance to the honour of God, the welfare and benefit of the Church, the peace of Christendom, and the ruin and destruction of the Infidel. And this thing we, Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, according to our powers offer unto God, desiring to achieve and perform such things as aforesaid.

'Wherefore we earnestly beg and entreat our said Lord Pope and the Lord Cardinals that after the fashion of other Councils they will abstain for the present from four causes which might specially hinder such a congregation, to wit, the creation of new Cardinals, the publication of the names of such as may recently have been created, the taking of any action against such existing Cardinals, prelates, and persons as may consent to, and desire to attend, the said Council, and likewise the hindering of the congregation of such a Council directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, by any way or means whatsoever, and any alienation therefrom of fiefs and lands of the Holy Roman Church. In all humility we protest that any such things done otherwise than by our Lord the Pope in the said Council will be null and void and of no effect and liable to be set aside and annulled by the said Council.

'And since this act of convocation and protest cannot be made by us in the presence of the aforesaid Pope Julius, seeing that he has imprisoned and threatened to imprison Cardinals, though they are his brothers and Princes of the Universal Church, and has caused the detention of ambassadors of the Princes, though it is contrary to the general law and custom, therefore we have ordained and resolved that this schedule or instrument of convention and protest be affixed to the doors of the churches in Modena, Reggio, and Parma, so that the whole may come to the notice of the said Pope Julius and of the Cardinals, Princes, and prelates. The which schedule we desire should have the force and effect of a public proclamation and command, constraining all persons cited as aforesaid to attend the said Council in precisely the same manner as if the said convention and protest had been notified to them personally, it being contrary to

reasonable expectation that that can be ignored and concealed which has thus been openly published.'[1]

This was the citation which Julius had found affixed to the church doors in Rimini, and to which he had replied by summoning a Council of his own. A Council, declared Julius in his counterblast, cannot be lawfully summoned otherwise than by a Pope, and a Council not so summoned must be deemed to be of no account. For the purpose of withstanding dangerous heretical tendencies and of defending the rights of the Holy See and with the approval of the Cardinals and in the plenitude of his Apostolic powers he pronounced the Milan decree of 16th May to be illegal, null, and void, threatened its authors with loss of dignities, the adherents of its Council with pains and penalties, and its Council's places of abode with excommunication. Nevertheless, he himself desired to end strife, promote peace, reform morals, and grapple with the Turkish peril, and accordingly he summoned an Oecumenical Council to meet in the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome in April 1512. He required that all Cardinals should attend this Council, requested that all Princes would attend it, and tried to get it proclaimed by his emissaries in the dominions of the Emperor and the King of France. In October, after the formation of the Holy League, he took the last irrevocable step, which made it impossible that the breach should be healed, and in a Public Consistory on 21st October the Cardinals of Santa Croce, Cosenza, Narbonne, and Bayeux, signatories of the Milan decree, were deprived, whilst another, Cardinal San Severino, and the Frenchman, d'Albret, were commanded to come to Rome. D'Albret had written to excuse himself on the ground that he was acting under compulsion, and it was thought in Rome that the Pope would forgive him, but the Papal Court did not look for the same leniency for San Severino, whose deprivation was regarded as certain, unless he should submit. 'The Pope', said one who reported these events, 'is hotter than ever against the French, and the Swiss Cardinal promises him that the Swiss shall move against Milan.'[2]

[1] Richer, *Historia Conciliorum Generalium*, vol. iii, pp. 185–9; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xii, cols. 250–3.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, col. 201.

The Pope's violence pleased no one: his warmest supporters disapproved of the deprivation of the schismatic Cardinals; and the Spanish ambassador with his usual bluntness told him of the disgust felt by Ferdinand, who had entered the Holy League to end schism, and found suddenly that the door to peace had been bolted and barred. It may be questioned whether the Spanish monarch really desired such a result, but it is indubitable that Julius could have put an end to the whole religious dispute, if he had been willing to accept any settlement but abject surrender, for there had been more than one moment when Louis and the dissident Cardinals would have welcomed an accord. The Florentine ambassador, Acciajuoli, had formed the opinion some time before that the Cardinals were inclined to regret their enterprise, and he prophesied that they would have good reason to repent their action, unless the Emperor should come to their aid, for they had not met with the support which they had expected. They thought, it was true, that they had taken the wind out of the Pope's sails by launching their bark first, and they supposed Julius to have lost his authority by his long delay; but Acciajuoli believed that they would find themselves mistaken, and would discover that their chance of success depended entirely upon the course of military operations. 'The fact is', said his colleague, Pandolfini, 'that in the matter of the Council the Emperor and the King blow hot or cold according to the course of events and their own interest and advantage, without the smallest regard for the good of the Church.' What Pandolfini said of the Princes the King's minister, Robertet, said of the Cardinals, declaring that their object was, not to reform the Church, but to secure preferment for themselves, and that they were worthy of little confidence. It was supposed in France that Spain would probably refuse her adhesion to the Council; that England would follow the Spanish lead; that Scotland would abstain; and that despite the Emperor's asseverations it was doubtful whether any Bishops would attend from Germany. In these circumstances the French Government did not set much store by the Council, and the King would be ready to make peace, if he could get fair terms.[1] The truth was that fits of fierce anger against Julius

[1] Renaudet, *Le Concile gallican de Pise-Milan*, pp. 43–6, 55, 58, 67.

alternated in Louis' mind with bouts of paralysing perplexity about the propriety of attacking him, and in his perplexity he would stay the forces which in his anger he had set in motion. He wanted to have Julius at his mercy, and launched against him his soldiers and his priests; but in the very circumstances which bid fair to frighten Julius he would grow frightened himself, and the Cardinal of Santa Croce had as little chance of being allowed to depose his rival as had Trivulzio of being permitted to occupy Rome. The result of these conflicting emotions in the mind of Louis was that, although he would sometimes be lashed on by failure, he was invariably curbed by success, and it was only in times of military reverses that he would essay a vigorous use of the Conciliar weapon, to which nothing but a military triumph could give an edge.

The effect of all this became plain, as the days drew near in which the Council was to become an affair of practical politics. The expedient of a Council postulated the co-operation of the Cardinals and the moral support of the powers. At one time circumstances had seemed to suggest that the Sacred College would not be inaccessible to French influence, for nearly one third of its members were French by origin or sympathy or were disposed in favour of France by dislike of Julius. To this party belonged the five Cardinals who on the outbreak of the Ferrara war had seceded from the Pope, and, escaping from his terrible proximity, had put themselves under the protection of the French King. They were the Frenchmen, Briçonnet, Cardinal of Narbonne, and René de Prye, Cardinal of Bayeux, the Italian, San Severino, and the Spaniards, Francesco Borgia, Cardinal of Cosenza, and Bernardino Carvajal, Cardinal of Santa Croce. Of these five Carvajal was by far the most able, and he would play the chief part in the coming Council, over which he was destined to preside. Personal ambition formed the mainspring of his action, and he could never forget that there had been a moment when the Keys of St. Peter had seemed to be within his grasp. The death of d'Amboise having removed his one formidable rival, he looked confidently to have those Keys entrusted to his keeping by a Council which should deprive Julius of their custody. He was the friend and political ally of Maximilian, with whom he had formed an intimacy when

serving as Legate in Germany, and whose interests he had ever since supported in the Papal Court. It was through friendship for Maximilian and hopes of winning the Papacy that he went over to Louis, and not through affection for France or desire to promote reform; nor, even so, did he go over until he had tried in vain to come to a working agreement with Ferdinand. In this self-seeking hypocrite Louis could not look for a very dependable ally.[1]

Amongst other members of the Sacred College the proposal for a Council evoked no enthusiasm, and through fear of Julius or respect for Ferdinand or jealousy of Carvajal or want of confidence in France Louis met with no support, even in the quarters where he had a right to look for it. He had thought that he might count on Ippolito d'Este, Cardinal of Ferrara, the brother of his *protégé* and ally; on the Cardinal of Finale, who had been his Governor in Brescia, and was reckoned among his firm adherents; on Francesco Soderini, Cardinal of Volterra, the brother of the Florentine Gonfalonier; on the Cardinal of Sorrento, who had quarrelled with Julius and refused to obey him; on the Cardinals of Corneto and Mantua; and on the Cardinals of Nantes, Albi, and Le Mans, who were his own subjects. All of them held aloof. The Cardinals of Finale and Sorrento declared openly that they would have no part or lot with schismatics. The Cardinal of Le Mans, Philip of Luxemburg, excused himself from participation on the score of his health. The Cardinal of Nantes took his cue from Anne of Brittany, and she was consistent in her opposition to the King's anti-Papal policy. The Cardinals of Volterra and Mantua remained at the Pope's side, and the Cardinal of Albi tried to make his peace with him. As for the Cardinals of Ferrara and Corneto, they publicly dissociated themselves from the Council, when their names appeared as signatories of the act of convocation, alleging that their names had been used without authority. In the Sacred College, therefore, Louis was like to be left with no support save from the five dissident Cardinals, and of these five one, Carvajal, was a notorious self-seeker, another, Cosenza, was Carvajal's henchman, a third was the Angevin, San Severino, and the two others were

[1] Lehmann, *Das Pisaner Concil*, pp. 26–9.

subjects and creatures of his own. Nor did the Council meet with such support in the Church at large as might make amends for the attitude of the Sacred College. It was shunned in Germany, and denounced or ignored in England and in Spain. No notice was taken of it in Scotland or in Hungary. No voice was raised for it in Italy, where the clergy in Louis' own possessions refused to take part in it. Even in France itself the influence of the Crown and the appeal to patriotism and the Gallican tradition could produce in the Church no sentiment more warm than reluctant acquiescence. 'The Gallican prelates', said an ambassador in August 1511, 'have little enthusiasm for the Council, for they are reluctant to be involved in trouble and worry, and are influenced rather by their respect for the King and his commands than by their own wishes and inclinations.'[1]

The indifference or hostility of the Church was matched by the indifference or hostility of the powers. The Gallican doctrine that a Council might be lawfully convened without the co-operation of the Pope did not commend itself to the judgement of Christendom, and in countries neutral in the dispute there was much honest doubt about the competence of a Council which the Pope had not summoned and would not attend, and which a great majority of the members of the Sacred College disavowed. In England and Spain the monarchs were setting out upon the roads which would lead them into the Papal fold, and from the Governments in these countries the Council could expect no support. In the eyes of Henry VIII it was a useful pretext for evading his treaty obligations to Louis. Ferdinand, crafty as ever, declared that in such a matter he would not presume to interfere, but must leave the decision to the free choice of his prelates; and to the argument that the abstention of Spain would produce a schism he replied that that did not trouble him, since a schism was in any event inevitable. Amongst all the Princes Louis could find no ally, and the Council no champion, save in the fickle Emperor, whose purpose was so uncertain, and whose arm so weak.

Maximilian had shown willingness to fall in with his ally's plan for summoning a Council when that plan was

[1] Lehmann, *Das Pisaner Concil*, pp. 28–31; Renaudet, *Le Concile gallican de Pise-Milan*, p. 139.

first put forward, for at that time he was humiliated by his want of success against the Pope's allies and exasperated by the Pope's policy, which had robbed him of his expected spoils, and he knew that he could avenge himself only with French help. He had therefore renewed his league with France, and had undertaken to support Louis in his religious policy, promising to apply the Gallican system in his own dominions and to give aid and countenance to a Council, if Julius should prove obdurate. That he had been serious in these intentions was shown by his actions, for he had concurred in the convocation of the Council, sent his proctors to Italy, and circularized the powers on his duties as the lay Head of Christendom. Had the Council met at once, he might, perhaps, have given it consistent support; but it did not meet, and, as the months passed, his zeal gradually cooled down. Several causes contributed to his change of mind. There were difficulties about the choice of the place in which the Council was to meet, Louis desiring that it should meet in Pisa, and Maximilian advocating an Imperial town, where the Council would be under his control. He objected that Pisa was too near the sea, too near the Pope's adherents, and too far from Germany; but it was in vain that he proposed Constance, Verona, or Trent, for to none of these could Carvajal and his colleagues be persuaded to consent. He offered to agree to Mantua, but again the Cardinals rejected his proposal, giving no reason, and possibly, as was maliciously suggested, having no better reason to give than a dislike of the thin local wines. When induced at last to accept the French proposal, he did so with bad grace, and the diplomatic check rankled in his breast. Angry with Louis, and disturbed by the attitude of his clergy, he began to pay heed to those—and they were many—who were cautioning him against the perils of schism and the folly of aggrandizing France. None was stronger on that side than the daughter whose judgement he had learned to respect and upon whose counsel he was wont to rely. 'Monseigneur,' she told him, 'under your great correction, it seems to me that you ought not to mix yourself up with this Council which is to be held at Pisa, but should leave it to the Pope, to whom the cognizance of such things belongs.' Maximilian was fast coming round to the same view, and the Council was like to receive

but a limp support from the secular arm, in so far as that arm was directed by the Imperial brain.[1]

Lastly, the selection of Pisa as the meeting-place of the Council produced a very unfortunate result in Florence, where the Signory began by agreeing reluctantly to a demand which it did not know how to resist, and ended by evincing a spirit not far removed from hostility, when the consequences of its compliance had made themselves felt. The gradual change in Florentine opinion may be traced in the correspondence of the Signory with its representatives, and that correspondence is worthy of some attention for the light it throws on the difficulties by which Louis path was beset.

The correspondence opens with a letter which on 26th May 1511 the Ten addressed to Acciajuoli, their representative at King Louis' Court. 'The Signory', they said, 'has been asked to agree to Pisa being chosen as the meeting-place of the Council and to consent to the publication in Florence of the edict of convocation. We have replied that the first matter is not urgent, and that as regards the other our commercial interests necessitate delay. You must use your influence with the King. Tell him that, as the city of Pisa is in great measure ruined and its environs are wasted, it would be impossible suitably to lodge and feed the concourse of people whom the meeting of a Council would bring thither. Explain that we are eager to meet his wishes, but are bound to consult our own interests, and that the selection of Pisa will provoke the Pope, who will retaliate by ecclesiastical censures and commercial reprisals. The King must therefore excuse us, if we put off our decision. It may be well also to point out to him that there is another serious objection to the selection of Pisa, namely this, that the King of Spain, if he should not adhere to the Council, would have its meeting-place at the mercy of his fleet.'[2]

[1] Imbart de la Tour, *Les origines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, pp. 141–2, 147–8; Lehmann, *Das Pisaner Concil*, pp. 19–20; Renaudet, *Le Concile gallican de Pise-Milan*, pp. 57, 83; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., vol. vi, pp. 356–7, 375–84; Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 421–2; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xxiv.

[2] Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–8 (abridged).

Florence might wish to procrastinate and delay, but the French Government had little sympathy with her difficulties and was urgent for a decision. That decision they were awaiting with an eagerness not unmingled with anxiety, said Acciajuoli in August, for to it they looked, not only for a clear declaration of Florentine policy, but for something which would ensure the success of all their plans.[1] Thus pressed, Florence gave way, though striving to keep her decision secret in the hope that, before the Pope should hear of it, the whole affair of the Council might have ended in smoke. The hope was vain: the concession of Pisa was not a matter which could be wrapped in the mystery of secret diplomacy, and the decision of the Signory was still fresh when Julius was informed of it by his Nuncio in Florence. He sent for the Florentine ambassador, and heaped insults and threats upon the city which had dared to truckle to his enemies. The ambassador attempted in vain to appease his wrath. 'I told him', he wrote to his Signory, 'how you have delayed your decision to the utmost, and how you have done your very best to dissuade the King from a Council; but the King's envoy and the Cardinals were insistent, and Florence, remembering that which befell her in 1494, could not venture to reject the demands of two powerful sovereigns. What she has done has been done under constraint; and even if she had refused Pisa, the Council would still have been held, while she would have been left at the mercy of the French and the Germans. The Pope replied that he could not accept these excuses; he thought the conduct of the Signory inexcusable; and he had no doubt that they would side with the Council as they had already sided with the French. "I give you warning", he went on, "that I mean to lay the whole city under an interdict and to act against you to the utmost of my power".'[2]

These Papal menaces bore immediate fruit: within a week of the interview between Julius and their representative the Signory announced that their Secretary, Machiavelli, would go to the Cardinals in Lombardy and to the King in France, to strive for the abandonment of the Council and the making of a general peace. The instructions to the Secretary, given on 10th September, impressed upon him the importance and

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 132.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 175–6.

the urgency of his mission. The reasons which had prompted the grant of the use of Pisa had for the most part ceased to be operative, and Florence had incurred great danger through the offence given to the Pope. The Secretary was to go at top speed to the Cardinals and the King's Lieutenant-General in Milan, and thence to the Court of France, his prime end and object being to secure the abandonment of the Council, or its removal to some other place, or, at the worst, its postponement for two or three months. The Cardinals were to be told of the military preparations afoot in Rome and Naples, and were to be adjured not to enter Florentine territory. At the French Court His Majesty was to be shown the consequences of attempting to do him pleasure, being informed of all that had happened and was likely to happen in Rome to the detriment of the Republic and its merchants, and being told of all the interdicts, censures, insults, and threats of war wherewith it and they were afflicted. Attention was to be called to the apathy of the Emperor and to the fact that not so much as one prelate had come to the Council from all that great province. It might also be remarked that in the French prelates too there might be seen a tardiness suggestive of reluctance, though it would be necessary to handle that point tactfully for fear of giving offence to His Majesty. The Council had begun ill. It was hated by the Pisans, who were under an interdict on its account. It lacked authority and reputation, and the Pope, having no cause to fear, was greatly wroth. From a beginning so feeble no one looked for a worthy end; no one believed in the Council; and with the passage of time it would sink lower in public esteem. The King was to be told this, and was to be urged vehemently to drop the Council, or at all events to change its place of meeting, stress being laid upon the objections to Pisa, namely, its vulnerability, which would be an inducement to the King of Spain to levy war, the Emperor's objections to it, its ruinous condition, and the sterility of its surroundings.[1]

Machiavelli set out at once, and on 13th September wrote from Borgo San Donnino to report progress in the earlier stages of his mission. 'I got here yesterday evening', he told the Ten, 'and found here Santa Croce, Saint-Malo, Cosenza,

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 132–7; Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 196–201.

and San Severino. I thought it best to talk first with Santa Croce, partly because he is, as it were, the leader, and partly because he is well affected to Florence. I had a long discussion with him about this matter of the Council, and he came to the conclusion that I had better see his colleagues. So after he had interviewed Cosenza and San Severino, I was called in and repeated to the three what I had already said to Santa Croce alone. They consulted together, and then took me to see Saint-Malo, who was in bed with gout, and to whom they bade me tell what I had previously told to them. The substance of this was the Pope's indignation about Pisa, the dangers to our city, and the threats to our merchants, in view of which things I was to beg that Their Eminences would not go to Florence. I pointed out that, since the Council was not ready to begin operations, this would not disturb it; and I urged all that I could think of, not omitting the Pope's preparations and the menaces of Spain.

'After a long consultation they called me back, and San Severino answered me in the name of the others. Their undertaking, he said, was a work acceptable to God and man. As for the consequences to Florence, that should have been thought of six months ago, when permission to use Pisa was granted; not, however, that there was anything to be afraid of from military operations, for never had the King of France had so many troops in Italy as now. They would go, not to Florence, but straight to Pisa, as soon as the French prelates and doctors should have come; and the Pope would then have so much to think of that he would not trouble about excommunications and wars.

'In talking with Santa Croce alone, I gathered that they would already have come to Pisa, if they had found Your Excellencies better disposed; but your hesitation has made them hesitate. If this be so, I fancy that my remarks will give them yet further pause, through apprehensions for their own safety; but what the result of that will be, I do not feel sure; for they have always wanted to have French troops with them, and now desire this more than ever; and I understand that they have to-day sent to the Viceroy in Milan, to beg him to come in person with 300 lances and escort them when they go to Pisa. Santa Croce says that

they are obliged to hold two or three sessions at Pisa, but that, to please Your Excellencies, they will then rise and go elsewhere. I learned last night that San Severino is to leave to-day for Germany, to persuade the Emperor to send his prelates to Pisa; and he is to promise that, as soon as a beginning has been made there, they will remove to any place His Majesty may be pleased to indicate.' [1]

From Borgo San Donnino Machiavelli hastened on to the French Court, and on 24th September the resident ambassador, Acciajuoli, wrote to tell the Ten of his safe arrival and of the joint audience which they had had of the King. Acciajuoli had himself been received in audience a week before, when he had told Louis of the Pope's menaces, and had asked him what he meant to do for Florence. Louis had replied that, if Florence were injured, she could call upon him for help, and that in case of necessity he would go to her aid in person and with all his men, for he was ready to answer with his life for her safety. On Machiavelli's arrival Acciajuoli returned again to the charge. 'Yesterday morning', he wrote, 'we went together to wait upon the King, to execute our commission. The King listened attentively, and was evidently impressed by your advice. To the suggestion that he should come to terms with the Pope and put an end to the Council, and that you should mediate for that purpose, he replied: "Would to God that you could do it! For there is nothing that I desire more, and I should be infinitely obliged to any one who could achieve it." He seemed to be of the same mind as before, and said that he had taken up the Council affair only to bring the Pope to an agreement, but declared that, even if he were to stop the Council, it would not make the Pope any more pacific. To the second suggestion, that the Council should be moved somewhere else, he answered at once and with decision that the thing was impossible. The Cardinals and prelates must go to Pisa for certain essential preliminaries, but they need stay no longer than was necessary, and he would use his influence with them in that behalf. He had done his best to spare you the anxiety of having the Council at Pisa, but, having convened it to meet there, he could not stultify him-

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 140–4; Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 217–20 (abridged).

self by any alteration. Otherwise it might have met at Vercelli, and it might still move thither after two or three sessions. He could not, however, make a change without the sanction of the Emperor and the consent of the Cardinals, whom he was bound to consult. When it was pointed out to him that the holding of the Council in Pisa not only brought on Florence ecclesiastical censures and commercial reprisals, but also involved her in the risk of a war to which she would be wholly unequal, he said that, though he could not believe that the Pope would really take any such action, the merchants might do well to reduce their stocks as far as possible; as for the risk of war, he thought it inconsiderable, for he did not believe that Spain would take any part in it, his relations with that power being very friendly. The upshot of it all was that we came to the conclusion that he would have met our wishes, if he could have done so, but was restrained by the reasons which he gave. There is another reason, which His Majesty did not mention, but which we learned from Robertet, and it influences him not less than the others—the fear lest a change of place might disgust some or all of the Cardinals, with disastrous results to their dubious constancy.

'After a long discussion on these points we put forward the third suggestion, namely, a postponement for two or three months, alleging in its favour that this would give time to come to terms, would show what course the Pope's illness would run, would bring us nearer to winter and so make it more difficult for him to go to war, and would give our nationals more time to see to their safety. He promised to use his best endeavours to prevent the Cardinals going to Pisa before All Saints' Day, and he will write to them to that effect. As probably he will not want them to be told openly of any prorogation, he will doubtless use expedients, such as the withholding of their safe-conduct, without which they have declared that they will not go to Pisa. This device appeass to be satisfactory, as the Cardinals certainly will not proceed, until assured of their safety.' [1]

The ambassadors did not know it, but at the time when they were with the King the blow had already fallen, and

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 164–8; Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 263–6 (abridged).

the Pope had passed from words to deeds. On 20th September his Nuncio left Florence, having arranged for the publication of the interdict within a space of forty-eight hours. Florence did as Venice had done in like circumstances, and appealed to a future General Council of the Church; but the Ten knew that the expedient was ineffective, and deemed the outlook grave. It was, indeed, the more grave in that the appeal served only to heighten the Pope's annoyance. He gave orders that all Florentine property in the March should be confiscated; he threatened to arrest all Florentine merchants in Rome; he menaced Florence with heavier ecclesiastical censures; he made the alarming announcement that Cardinal de' Medici would go as Legate to Perugia; and he vowed that he would attack Florence by sea and land. Louis seemed to be moved when he heard of the trials of his suffering ally, ordering the confiscation of all the property of the Pope's relatives in Genoa and Savona and the sequestration of all Papal estates in the Astesan, and repeating that he would do all in his power to aid Florence, even to the extent of going in person to Italy in her service. Acciajuoli thanked him, but said that his reprisals would not make amends for Florentine losses, and that the one helpful move was to give up holding the Council in Pisa. Though unable to secure this concession, the ambassador nevertheless remained firm in his opinion that the King throughout had been genuinely desirous of peace, and would have been glad to give up the Council, if he could have obtained suitable terms; the Pope was at the root of all the trouble, for it was the Pope who would make no concession; and the King turned to the Council as his one resource.[1]

As her relations with Rome deteriorated, Florence stiffened in her resistance to French demands. These demands had to do with a safe-conduct for the Cardinals and adequate military protection for the Council and its place of meeting. Having burnt her fingers by the concession of Pisa, Florence would not plunge her hand in the flames by admitting French troops to her territories. To satisfy the King and the Emperor, the Ten agreed in August to grant a safe-conduct to all members of the Council travelling through Florentine territory to Pisa; but to the demand that Pisa should be

[1] Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 246–7, 258–62, 290–1, 304–5.

placed in the military occupation of the Princes they returned a peremptory refusal. Louis, they reminded him, had promised, when he asked for the use of the town, that nothing should be done there displeasing or detrimental to the Government of the Republic; the demand for a military occupation was a direct violation of his pledge; and insistence on such a condition would compel Florence to rescind her grant. This was on 22nd August. On 13th September the Ten reiterated their determination in yet more emphatic terms. If the Cardinals were to bring troops with them, they then declared, it would involve the ruin of the Pisa district and place Florence in grave peril; and they instructed Acciajuoli to tell the King that the thing was impossible, and they could not consent to it. Louis answered that something must be done to ensure the safety of the Council, but still the Ten refused to give way. It would be foolish, they said, to send troops to Pisa to protect the Council against the Pope and the Catholic King, for the Catholic King could act only through his fleet, against which the proper protection was, not men-at-arms, but ships, and to hold the Pope in check, it would be more to the point to send the troops to Bologna. There they might do some good, whereas sending them to Pisa could have no effect beyond completing the ruin and intensifying the famine of that district and involving Florence in intolerable hardships.[1]

The solution of these difficulties was a matter of vital consequence to Carvajal and his colleagues, who were eager to go to Pisa, but dared not move from Borgo San Donnino without an escort of French horse. On 2nd October Francesco Vettori was sent to them, to convey the final prohibition of the Florentine Government. The Cardinal of Bayeux, to whom he spoke first, acquiesced in the decision, remarking that he had never believed in the necessity for guards. Santa Croce was less accommodating, his temper not being improved by the fact that the hour was early, and that he was still in bed, having taken a dose. 'Then your Signory will not consent', he said, 'to our taking M. de Lautrec to guard the Council with 150 or 200 light horse; nor will they allow us to keep men-at-arms at Sarzana or in the Lucca district, to protect us against a fleet landing troops

[1] Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 126–8, 250–1.

at Piombino or against Papal forces advancing by land. How, then, are we to be guarded? Is it desired that persons of our quality should rely upon your word, when you make all sorts of difficulties about giving us a safe-conduct, and when in fact I have not yet got one? You know full well that the Pope would gladly spend 50,000 ducats to catch any one of us.'[1]

By her refusal to admit French troops Florence ran the risk of offending Louis, but succeeded in lessening the more terrible anger of the Pope. On 13th October Julius told the Florentine ambassador, Tosinghi, that he would suspend the interdict for fourteen days, if Florence would go a step further and expel the proctors of the Council. 'I shall soon be stronger than the French', he added, 'and will drive them back over the mountains; England is joining the League; the Emperor will have joined it by the middle of November; and he is already on the way to an accord with Venice. You will soon see that all the important powers will enter the League.' Tosinghi suggested that the French might join it too, and then there would be a general peace. 'I would not have that on any account,' answered Julius hotly. Tosinghi rejoined that by the terms the entry of any power was provided for. 'True,' answered Julius, 'but much must first be done. Assume that willingly or unwillingly France gives back Bologna and gives up her protection of Ferrara, of which she is trying to deprive me: even so according to the terms of the League she must also restore to the Venetians Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, Crema, and all their territories. Believe me, we shall soon drive the French out of Italy. Their military position in Lombardy is hopeless, because the Venetians will attack them on one side, and I shall attack them on the other.' 'This he said', commented Tosinghi in reporting it, 'with great vehemence and an almost unimaginable animosity against the French. In my belief, we can never count him as a friend.'[2]

Amidst these difficulties and delays the time drew near when the ill-omened Council was to enter upon its labours. September 1st, the date originally fixed for the inaugural session, had come and gone, and there was a doubt whether a beginning could be made on the date next appointed, All

[1] Renaudet, *op. cit.*, p. 319. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 367–8.

Saints' Day, 1st November. The difficulty about the escort was, indeed, successfully surmounted by Florence permitting, and the Cardinals accepting, a small archer guard under the command of Lautrec; but the removal of that difficulty did not clear the path of all obstacles. Feeling ran so high against the Council that its members were refused accommodation on the road; they found lodgings hard to come by in Pisa; and the doors of the Cathedral were closed against them by order of the Chapter. It was not until 30th October that the greater part of the members of the Council reached Pisa, and then their reception was so cold as to be almost disrespectful, a mere handful of people turning out to witness their entry, and these being driven in again by rain. The Fathers were few, and so far numbered no more than four Cardinals, sixteen prelates, and a few abbots and doctors. Should this paltry company claim that it voiced the opinion of Christendom, the claim would be derisible, and the prospects were black. 'A formidable coalition of all Europe, hesitating Bishops, an irresolute King, doubt and impending hostility in Florence, a Pope inaccessible to seduction and impervious to fear, sure alike of his right and of his might—these were the conditions in which the Pisa assembly was about to open.'[1]

When the Cardinals reached Pisa, their first step was to meet in Carvajal's lodgings and discuss the question of their future procedure. They longed for official and ecclesiastical recognition in the town which was to be the scene of their activities. Sending for the representative of Florence, they put before him three demands: that the Cathedral vestments might be placed at their disposal; that the people should be compelled to attend the opening ceremonies; and that pressure should be put upon the civic and military authorities to honour those ceremonies with their presence. When told in reply that these were matters for the Podesta and the Captain, they asked that the requests might be referred to those officials. The Podesta and the Captain answered that, as they never interfered in religious matters, they must leave it to the Cardinals to make their own arrangements about vestments, and that they could not think of placing any constraint upon the people in a matter

[1] Imbart de la Tour, *Les origines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, p. 158.

of conscience, but that in temporal matters they would follow the Signory's invariable practice and study to please the Most Christian King. When the officials of the city evinced so little desire to pay respect to the Cardinals, it was unlikely that the Cathedral authorities would modify their hostile attitude, and Carvajal and his colleagues not only could borrow no vestments, but even found that the doors of the Cathedral were closed against them when they went there to celebrate their inaugural Mass on All Saints' Day. On that occasion, therefore, they were placed in the humiliating position of being obliged to conduct their service in a small parish church. Lautrec espousing their cause, however, and a great commotion being made about the behaviour of the Chapter, the Florentine Government were compelled to intervene, and orders were sent to Pisa that the use of the Cathedral should no longer be refused to the Council.

The doors of the Duomo being thus thrown open to it, the Council met there for its first session on 5th November, and in the presence of his colleagues the Cardinal of Santa Croce celebrated Mass. That done, he took a chair on the altar steps, and, a deacon having commanded that all laymen should leave the choir, the Bishops put on their episcopal robes with copes and mitres. After a space for silent devotion Carvajal recited a prayer, composed for the occasion, that God would enlighten their minds, so that they might see the truth and follow it, and would give them strength, so that they might refuse to be seduced by entreaty, bribe, or any human artifice. He then mounted the pulpit and delivered a sermon in Latin, which a member of the congregation thought 'very appropriate', though it was an hour long. His subjects were a consideration of the conditions in which a Council ought to be convened, an argument that such conditions then existed, and an exhortation to his hearers to assume the burden for Christ's sake. The sermon was followed by a hymn of the Holy Spirit, and then a litany was chanted, in the course of which Carvajal thrice repeated the words, 'That it may please Thee to direct and preserve this Holy Synod', the clergy responding, 'We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord'. Then the Bishop of Lodève, a son of the Cardinal of Saint-Malo, went up into the pulpit and re-

hearsed four decrees. The first declared that the Council was legally convened. The second asserted that the Pope's censures were null and void. The third invoked pains and penalties against all who should in any way injure or impede the Council or its adherents, and declared that the Council summoned by Julius was null and void by reason of its being forestalled, of its place of meeting being insecure, and of the inaptness of a Pope to summon a Council when the Church is scandalized by his evil deeds. The fourth appointed the Council's officers, naming the Cardinal of Santa Croce as its President and M. de Lautrec as its custodian. Carvajal affected reluctance to accept the Presidency, declaring 'with much foolish talk' that he could not shoulder so grave a responsibility, but in the end submitted with the words, 'Your pleasure be done'. When the four decrees had been rehearsed, the Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots were asked, 'Placet vobis?', and all answered, 'Placet'. A notarial act was then drawn up, and a *Te Deum* sung. The second session having been announced for the following Friday, the assembly then dispersed.

In the second session on 7th November the Cardinal of Saint-Malo said a Mass of the Holy Ghost, which was followed by the same ceremonies as before, and then an Abbot preached on the need for a reformation of the Church, exhorting the prelates present to amend themselves and their ways. After the sermon the French ambassador mounted the pulpit and rehearsed four decrees. The first enjoined loyalty on the members of the Council, and declared that no secessions could deprive it of its authority. The second forbade appeals to Rome, and declared that the causes of all adherents of the Council should be heard in the Council only and not elsewhere. The third appointed a committee of four bishops to report on the reformation of the Church. The fourth nominated some more officials. The third session was fixed for 14th November.[1]

Before that day came, events occurred which induced the Fathers to modify their plans. From the first they had been uneasy in Pisa, where they were exposed to danger from their enemies, where the population was markedly hostile, where

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 178–80; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 233–6.

food was scarce, and where lodgings were poor. Machiavelli laid stress upon these drawbacks in his dealings with the Cardinals, his Government having sent him to Pisa to induce the Council to move. At first he had found Carvajal disposed to make the best of them, the Cardinal saying that, though there might be no abundance, yet the scarcity was tolerable, and the Fathers did not complain, knowing as they did that in Pisa there were no such palaces as in Milan, nor could there be such good living as in France. Machiavelli replied that it was not only in the matter of comfort that they would gain by a move, for the Pope's animosity would be lessened, and they might find a population more obedient than that of Tuscany, not to mention the promise made at Borgo San Donnino that the Council should depart from Pisa after two or three sessions. On 9th November an incident occurred which powerfully reinforced the Secretary's arguments. Two soldiers, walking in the streets of Pisa, insulted a couple of Pisan girls; the bystanders resented the affront; and when the Town Guard and Lautrec's archers joined in the fray, the brawl began to assume formidable proportions. Half a dozen Pisans fell on one side, several Frenchmen on the other, and it was only by the intervention of some Florentine officers that a greater slaughter was averted. Nor did the affair end there, for the scuffle had inflamed the smouldering passions of the populace, and the crowd, hurrying away to Carvajal's lodgings, attempted with cries of 'Kill! Kill!' to force its way into the rooms where Lautrec and the Cardinals were assembled.[1]

As a result of this disturbance the third session, fixed for the 14th, was advanced to the 12th, and it was then resolved that the Council should leave Pisa for Milan, where its fourth session would be held on December 13th. Meanwhile the Pope was to be invited to agree to the transference of the Council to some neutral meeting-place acceptable to all parties, the invitation being given rather to save appearances than in the expectation that it would be accepted. The other resolutions of this session were to the effect that the Council could not be dissolved till the Church should

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, vol. vi, pp. 177–9; Renaudet, *Le Concile gallican de Pise-Milan*, pp. 470–1; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, col. 281.

be reformed in Head and members, and that no Father might absent himself without the written consent of the six Cardinals and Bishops who were thereby appointed Commissioners of the Council. Before the evening of the next day all the members of the Council were on the road to Milan, and Pisa had seen the last of the assembly which was to be known in history by her name.

In the capital of Louis XII's Italian dominions the Fathers were in less danger from their enemies, but despite the fact that they were under the immediate protection of France their position was not much improved in other respects. The arrival in Milan of the Cardinal of Saint-Malo was the signal for a remarkable outburst of popular feeling, and for several days not a priest could be found who was willing to celebrate Mass. By orders of the Senate a few unbeneficed clergy then began to officiate, but the canons and other dignitaries persisted in their refusal to take part in or attend divine worship, and, when compelled to give way by threats of arrest and punishment, proclaimed publicly that they were acting under duress. The Cardinal of Santa Croce was expected to reach Milan on 30th November, and the Bishops and clergy of the province were ordered to be present, to honour his solemn entry; but the Bishops ignored the order, the clergy made difficulties about obeying it, and the entry had to be postponed until 4th December. When that day came, the entry was again put off, this time on the pretext of bad weather, but in fact, as was generally believed, because so few ecclesiastics had come to take part in the ceremony. The entry was now postponed until the 7th, and a stringent order was issued by the Government that absentees would be treated as rebels, their temporalities being diverted to the use of the Council. Even this threat failed of effect with many of the objectors, so that, when the 7th came, there was only a small attendance of Bishops and clergy, and these did not include one ecclesiastic of importance. Nor did the presence of the laity make amends for the absence of the clergy, for apart from the members of the Senate the gentry of Milan had decided to keep away, whilst humbler bystanders in the streets greeted the Cardinals with mocking and derisive cries. Carvajal entered in his Cardinal's robes, but it was remarked that he came

without a baldacchino or other insignia. The omission was not due to modesty. Nothing daunted by the coldness of his reception, he went about giving his blessing as though the Triple Crown, to which he aspired, already adorned his brow.[1]

On its departure from Pisa the Council had announced its fourth session for 13th December, but when the time came, the Milanese was in the throes of another Swiss invasion, and it was not till 4th January that the Council could meet in peace and safety, to resume its interrupted labours. In this session a further attempt was made to compel the Pope to recognize the Council; in the fifth session on 11th February San Severino was appointed Legate in Bologna; and in the sixth session on 24th March Julius was required to revoke the decree which convened the Lateran Council, and was pronounced contumacious, should he fail to enter an appearance on the third citation. Then came the great French victory at Ravenna, and in its seventh and eighth sessions on 19th and 21st April the Council, long restrained by the indecisive course of the war, at last plucked up its courage to accomplish the deed which it had been brought into existence to perform. That deed, in the language of the Scripture deemed appropriate to the occasion, was to put away the abomination of desolation from the Holy place. 'At a time when a deluge of crimes inundates the Church in its Head and members, when faith totters, and the Church falls in ruins, this Holy Council has met to save Christian society.... It has, however, been troubled and molested by him whose duty was to protect it. All ways have been tried with him—prayers, entreaties, advice, even threats—but he has turned a deaf ear to all. So far from paying heed, he has laboured to undo our work. . . . Therefore the Council calls upon all Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Kings, Princes, Dukes, Universities, and Communities, upon all clergy regular and secular, and upon all Christian people, no longer to acknowledge Pope Julius, and it forbids that any should obey him, because he is a disturber of the peace, contumacious, and an obstinate and daring author of schism.... He has rendered himself liable to the penalties decreed by the Councils of Constance and Bâle, and we declare that he

[1] Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 558–63.

is suspended from all Pontifical rights, and that such rights devolve upon the present Council.'[1]

Scarcely had these bold words been spoken when the situation which had called them forth underwent a radical change. On the morrow of Ravenna the road to Rome seemed to lie open before Louis' victorious forces. A few weeks later those forces were struggling unsuccessfully to stem the tide of overwhelming defeat. When place after place was being plucked from French hands, there could be no more security for the Council Fathers in Milan, where French power alone had protected them against popular hatred. They fled across the mountains to Lyons, and there lingered on for a while in obscurity, till at last they faded unobtrusively from the scene.

As one orb sank behind the clouds, another and a brighter luminary mounted radiant in the sky. The Lateran Council was opened by Julius in May 1512. Spain supported it; England acknowledged it; the Emperor submitted to it, disavowing his connexion with the schismatic assembly of Pisa. Had the Pope lived, France must have paid dearly for her unsuccessful apostasy, but Julius was a sick and broken man, and died in February 1513. The aim of his successor was to put an end to schism by a policy of conciliation. The schismatic Cardinals were pardoned, although they had fallen into his power, and before the year was out he had the happiness of receiving the submission of the King of France.

'The Council of Pisa had been a costly blunder. Abroad it had given rise to an exceedingly formidable coalition. . . . At home it had produced the collapse of Conciliar Gallicanism. . . . The victories which might have justified French resistance and French orthodoxy were not forthcoming. Reverses . . . left no choice but between dismemberment and peace. And peace involved a religious surrender. . . . Once more the Conciliar movement had failed, and this time the failure was final.'[2]

[1] Sandret, 'Le Concile de Pise', *Revue des questions historiques*, vol. xxxiv, pp. 450–1.

[2] Imbart de la Tour, *Les origines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, pp. 173–4.

XXV

RAVENNA

The Council of Pisa was in the nature of an interlude in the temporal struggle, and to the story of that struggle we must now return. We took leave of it at the time of the formation of the Holy League, the powerful confederacy of which the professed object was the protection of the Church, but the secret aim was the expulsion of the French from Italy. So far, at all events, as concerned the ulterior designs of Julius II, the architect of the League, there could be no doubt, for he himself defined his ends as 'the absolute independence of the Church, the maintenance of her prestige, the establishment of a balance of power in Italy, so that no one State may be stronger than any other, but all may co-operate with the Holy See in turning out the foreigner and making war on the Turk'. 'His one thought', added the diplomatist who recorded this pronouncement, 'is to extirpate the French and eradicate their roots in Ferrara and Florence. He wants the Venetians to carry out their promises to the Emperor, and declares that, if they refuse, he will employ all his power to ruin them. That they will be such fools as to decline to come to an agreement he does not believe, and when an agreement is reached, the situation of Italy will be such that no State will dare to attack its neighbours, but all will remain in peace, as in bygone days, and then all will be at leisure to repel the barbarians.' When these were the avowed intentions of Julius, it behoved the French to look to themselves, for Julius, as a Mantuan envoy said of him, was a man who would not stick at turning the world upside down.[1]

When the Holy League was published, every intelligent student of international affairs understood that the situation had been modified profoundly by the Pope's diplomatic triumph. By a stroke of the pen the political position of the King of France, till then secure, had been turned into one of difficulty, and the military situation of his generals had been rendered precarious. In addition to the certain hostility of

[1] *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, pp. 135, 120.

the Pope and of the confederates whom he had won for himself in Venice, Spain, and England, Louis would have to reckon with the probable hostility of the Swiss; he could not count on Genoa, always restless and unreliable; and such was the temper of his Lombard subjects that the Milanese could not be made secure without the presence of large forces capable of dealing with every contingency. Both from a political and from a military point of view there was cause for anxiety in the situation of La Palice, who had advanced to the support of the Emperor. Should La Palice remain where he was, the French forces would be divided at a time when concentration was imperatively required. Should he retire, the Emperor could scarcely escape disaster, and his troubles must react injuriously upon his fidelity to France. Nor was it by any means certain that La Palice could retire with safety. His companies had been kept much below full strength by fraudulent returns, and had been further depleted by sickness, death, and desertion, whilst their discipline had been undermined by the evils consequent upon a long neglect to send them their pay. In a retreat the force would be hampered by the presence of many sick; it would be burdened by the transport of guns; in the devastated area which it must traverse it would be short of food; the population would everywhere be hostile; and an enemy would be able to attack it with everything in his favour. 'The conduct of affairs here', wrote Pandolfini, the Florentine representative, from Lombardy in October 1511, 'and the behaviour of the French are such that it would occasion no surprise, if they were one day to suffer some noteworthy disaster. This I feel in duty bound to report, for I cannot conceal that which I see and know, and I am convinced that in the long run it is impossible that bad methods of government should produce good results.' [1]

The King's officers and the King's men in Milan were not wholly responsible for the state of things which Pandolfini deplored. The King himself was in no small measure to blame, for he was attempting the impossible task of directing from France the conduct of war and the expenditure of money in Italy. Over and over again, in this connexion and

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 535–6, 538.

in others, contemporaries condemned Louis XII for what they called his parsimony or stinginess or avarice. The truth was that in his conduct of affairs in Italy the King exhibited the defects of a virtue, and that virtue a rare one in absolute monarchs. Willing enough that the victor's laurel should adorn his brow, he yet would not suffer the laurel to be watered with his subjects' tears. His wars were to be wars waged in foreign lands and carried on at the foreigner's expense, and from this view there followed the desire to control, and the reluctance to finance, them, of which his critics complained, and by which, undoubtedly, his generals suffered. The critics said that opportunities were lost whenever promptness was necessary to seize them, and that misfortunes were provoked by the inability to guard against them. There was some substance in the complaint. In the autumn of 1511 the Viceroy of Milan and his advisers, foreseeing the likelihood of renewed friction with the Swiss, desired to buy off the Cantons and at the same time to provide for emergencies by enrolling more infantry. The King restricted them to the offer of what he called a reasonable bargain, or, in other words, of the old terms which were no longer acceptable to the Confederacy; and the Viceregal Council was left to deplore a 'stinginess which was the exact opposite of the sort of medicine that was needed to heal the Swiss sickness'. In the following December, when the sickness had reached a head and Milanese roads were again resounding to the tramp of Confederate legions, the defence was hampered by want of infantry, because the Viceroy had not dared to spend money without permission; 'and intelligent people believed that this stinginess might cause some great disaster'.[1]

This apprehension was shared to the full by Pandolfini, an accurate and well-informed student of affairs. He did not know whether the Swiss were giving trouble spontaneously or at the instigation of others, but he knew that they had been intractable. They had refused offers of an alliance with Louis XII on the old terms, saying that the King's power and prestige had been increased by their efforts, and that it was therefore proper that they, too, should gain an advantage. They would discuss terms, they had said, when, stand-

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *op. cit.*, pp. 540–3.

ing with arms in their hands within the King's territories, they had taught him the extent of their League's power. It was probable, thought Pandolfini, that the trouble could be cured by *écus*, but the King was economical. Moreover, he was proud, and found it strange and dishonourable that the Swiss should put compulsion on him. It was impossible to settle the matter without his sanction; he was far away; distance caused delay; and the greater the delay, the greater was the danger of a disturbance disastrous in itself and likely to react disastrously on French interests in Bologna. From whatever point of view it might be regarded, the situation looked ugly, and all the more so in that the French were inadequately prepared and by their misconduct had estranged the whole population of Lombardy. The French believed that the Spaniards would be late in taking the field, so that the Swiss disturbance might be quelled first, and all their forces set free for the Bologna operations, if the need should arise. Pandolfini said that he hoped for the best, but in the act of saying so made it transparently plain that he feared the worst.[1]

The new trouble with the Cantons synchronized with the formation of the Holy League, but was not instigated by the makers of that political combination. It was the outcome of a spontaneous ebullition of Swiss irascibility, provoked by an inopportune blunder. Two envoys from the Cantons of Schwyz and Freiburg were slain at Lugano in Louis' dominions, and Louis, too distant from the scene of the mischief to be sensible of its repercussions, imprudently delayed to give proper satisfaction. The incident produced an electric effect upon the many sections of the Swiss population which were spoiling for a fight. There were some who thirsted to efface the memory of the inglorious campaign of the previous year; there were others who chafed against the restrictions which impeded their commerce with Louis' Italian possessions; some resented the constant efforts of the French to carry on an illicit recruiting campaign in the Confederacy's territory; others cast covetous eyes upon the ill-defended wealth of Lombardy. All these were in a mood to seize upon any pretext for a renewal of hostilities, and when the men of Schwyz took up their weapons and asked for

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 544–5.

comrades in arms, their appeal met with a ready response. Descending by the St. Gotthard pass, the first Swiss contingents reached Bellinzona in November 1511, and by the 30th were at Varese in Louis' dominions. There they were shortly joined by other companies, which brought their numbers up to 10,000 men; and there was reason to believe that Venice would send an army to co-operate with them in their campaign. The forces at the disposal of Gaston de Foix, who had succeeded Chaumont d'Amboise as Lieutenant-Governor of Milan, were not adequate to an emergency of these dimensions. He had to provide for the safety of Parma and Bologna, menaced by the forces of the Holy League; he had to make Verona secure against the possibility of a Venetian *coup de main*; and he had to hold down rebellious populations in Brescia and Bergamo. 'The Swiss,' wrote Pandolfini in these first days of December, 'if half as numerous as they are said to be, can march into the suburbs of Milan at their own sweet will, for they are only thirty miles off, and on all the road there is not a torrent or a stronghold to hinder their progress. The French are of the same mind as last year, that is to say, they mean to get near them, avoid a battle, follow them wherever they go, and cut off their supplies. Thus the Swiss can lead the French whithersoever they may please, and, as they will lead the way, they will find whatever food they want, and the more so because it is everywhere believed—whether truly or no, I cannot tell—that they pay for all that they take. I well remember that last year they paid for what they took in their advance, and on their retreat stole what they could.'[1]

One circumstance was in favour of the defence: the weather was very bad; torrential rains made the roads impassable; and it was not until 8th December that the invaders were able to advance from Varese in the direction of the capital. Two days later a large party of them, going out from Gallarate to forage, fell in with a considerable French force under La Palice and Trivulzio, and after an initial repulse succeeded in defeating it with heavy loss. The entire Swiss army then moved on Legnano, which Gaston de Foix evacuated, and thence marched towards Milan, maintaining excellent order, and giving the French no chance to take

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *op. cit.*, p. 544.

them at a disadvantage. By 14th December they were within sight of the capital, whither Gaston had retreated, and where he was feverishly completing his preparations for a siege. They hoped to profit by the well-known disaffection of the Milanese, and, declaring that they came, not as conquerors, but as deliverers, appealed to the people to rise against the French; but Milan did not stir, for little as it loved its masters, it preferred an insolent Frenchman to the ferocious marauders from the mountains. Without help from insurrectionary movements in the city, an expeditionary force was powerless against the Lombard capital. The walls were too strong for its field pieces, and its numbers did not suffice for an investment. Its own situation was uneasy, for its allies did not come, and its enemies were daily growing stronger. Moreover, the weather was still unfavourable, good billets were unprocurable, and food was becoming scarce—circumstances which were the more adverse in that Swiss soldiers were always as impatient of hardship as they were splendidly contemptuous of danger. From Monza, whither they had fallen back on the 15th, they attempted to open negotiations with the French, but Gaston refused to entertain their overtures, and on the 20th they set out in disorder for the Alps. The flames of a score and more of thriving villages marked where the retreating force had passed upon its destructive way.[1]

The world was soon to hear more of the young man who had succeeded Chaumont d'Amboise in the Viceroyalty of Milan. At this time Gaston de Foix was barely twenty-two years of age, having been born on 10th December 1489. Through his father he claimed to be King of Navarre, Viscount of Narbonne, and Count of Foix and Bigorre; by his mother, a Princess of the House of Orleans, he was a nephew of Louis XII; and his sister was that Germaine de Foix who had become Queen of Spain by her marriage with Ferdinand in 1505. He had served in the Genoa expedition of 1507, had fought in the advance-guard at Agnadello, and had been present at the capture of Bologna in 1510. Louis, who was much attached to him, had given him the Duchy

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 313–14; Ch. Kohler, 'Les Suisses dans les guerres d'Italie', *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève*, Series II, vol. iv, pp. 230–78; Oechsli, *History of Switzerland, 1499–1914*, Eng. trans., pp. 35–6.

of Nemours in 1507, and after Chaumont's death in 1511 selected him for the highly responsible position of the Milanese Viceroyalty. Events were to prove that the Royal confidence was not misplaced. The situation which confronted the young general was one of very great difficulty and danger. By his repulse of the Swiss he had, indeed, secured a respite on his northern frontier, but that success did not affect the projects of the Holy League, and the League was preparing to launch the Spanish and Papal armies in an attack from the south upon Parma or Bologna, whilst the Venetian forces marched from the east upon the cities which had been wrested from the Venetian *terra firma*, and were longing to return beneath Venetian rule. At the time of the Swiss retreat a Spanish army, consisting of 1,000 men-at-arms, 1,500 light horse, and 8,000 foot, with 22 guns, was marching on Romagna, where the Pope had in the field 800 men-at-arms, 800 light horse, and 8,000 Italian foot. Fabrizio Colonna, Pedro Navarro, and many Neapolitan barons were with the Spaniards; Marc'Antonio Colonna, Giovanni Vitelli, Malatesta Baglione, and other noted *condottieri* were serving in the Papal ranks; and Ramon de Cardona, Viceroy of Naples, was in command of the whole force. Early in January 1512 Cardona decided to undertake the siege of Bologna. The city was garrisoned by some infantry, recruited by the Bentivogli, and by 2,000 German 'landsknechte' and 200 French lances under Lautrec and Yves d'Alègre, whom Gaston de Foix had sent to its aid; but these forces were unequal to the defence of a large circuit of wall, especially when that wall was partly dominated by neighbouring heights. Gaston was on the horns of a dilemma. If he were to leave Bologna to its fate, the place would inevitably be lost, to the great injury of French prestige and to the detriment of his own future operations. If he were to go to its aid, he might imperil the army on the safety of which the whole French cause depended, and he would expose the Milanese, not only to the risk of another Swiss raid, but also to the more certain danger of an invasion by the Venetians, who were already in arms near its borders.

The movements of the Venetian army left no doubt that their first objective was to be the important town of Brescia, and Gaston was anxious about the place, for its garrison was

weak and its people were discontented. Under the pressure of the more immediate danger he decided in January to march southwards, but even in the act of doing so he was still more than half inclined to turn back to the aid of the Lombard city, leaving Bologna to look to itself with such reinforcements as could be spared for its defence. At the end of January, however, whilst halted at Finale, he received an urgent appeal from the captains in Bologna, who told him that their walls were breached, that the enemy were in the suburbs, and that the plight of the town was becoming desperate; and they added, in words which would not leave him indifferent, that, if he were to join them, their united forces might hope for an opportunity to attack and defeat the enemy. On receiving this communication he decided to relieve Bologna first and then to save Brescia afterwards, if he could. He left Finale at dusk on 4th February with 1,300 lances and 14,000 foot, and in the grey light of next day's dawn, a day of snow and wind and bitter cold, he entered Bologna by the San Felice gate, not only unopposed by the enemy, but even unperceived by them. Not for the first or last time had there been a sharp division of opinion in the enemy camp, where the dashing Fabrizio Colonna was a thorn in the flesh of the timorous and incompetent commander, Cardona, and his cautious lieutenant, Navarro. When the Papal and Spanish troops had reached Bologna, Fabrizio had pressed for an investment of the city, lest French reinforcements should continue to enter it; but Cardona, who said that the place was certain to fall in any case, had refused to sanction an investment, and had recalled the advance-guard which Fabrizio had thrown forward to control the northern approaches to the city. Fabrizio had again been overruled, when on the news that Gaston was at Finale he had advocated an immediate attack upon him, lest the French should enter the city and compel the siege to be raised. Thus the way into Bologna had been left open, and Gaston with all his men had marched in unseen. On learning this startling fact from a captured Stradiot, the enemy secretly and in haste withdrew their guns under cover of darkness, and next morning marched away in the direction of Imola.[1]

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, col. 431, vol. xiv, cols. 176–7; Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 400–10.

Bologna had therefore been delivered from immediate peril, but, as Gaston had foreseen, its deliverance was effected at the price of a grievous misfortune elsewhere, for in the moment when the French were marching to its relief, the Venetians succeeded in hoisting the banner of St. Mark over the walls of Brescia. Nowhere had the temper of the people caused more uneasiness to Louis' officers than in this important city, and the better to contain it, they had ruled it with a severity which had not stopped short of executions and deportations. The chief result of their repressive measures was to strengthen the prevalent discontent, and those measures were especially resented by the nobles, by whom their effects were chiefly felt. A band of young patricians swore on the altar to effect the deliverance of their city, and one of the most influential men in Brescia, Count Luigi Avogadro, who had begun by welcoming the French, now espoused the patriotic cause, offering to co-operate with Venice in the restoration of the old régime. His offers were accepted by the Senate, and when it became known that Gaston de Foix had marched to the relief of Bologna, Andrea Gritti, the Venetian general, received orders to move forward with all his forces and join hands with the levies which Avogadro had undertaken to raise. Crossing the Adige at the head of 300 men-at-arms, 1,300 light horse, and some 3,000 foot, Gritti moved westwards, forded the Mincio, and approached Brescia, while Avogadro and his local levies also advanced towards the town. French vigilance prevented a rising, and Gritti was compelled to retire; but in a few days he returned, accompanied by many peasants, who had risen at Avogadro's summons; and while the Venetian troops diverted the attention of the garrison to the gates, the peasants forced an entrance by smashing the defences of a water conduit. As soon as the attackers showed themselves in the town, the people declared for them, and the French garrison, unable to expel the enemy or contain the populace, were obliged to seek an asylum behind the walls of the citadel.[1]

[1] Guicciardini, *op. cit.*, pp. 411–12; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 437, 439; L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 254–65; 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 254–65, 268–72; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 262–3.

The loss of Brescia would have been serious enough if it had stood alone, for after Milan it was the most important city in Lombardy; and it did not stand alone. The place had set an example of successful daring, and the effect was electric in all the restless towns of the old Venetian dominion. Bergamo threw off the yoke and recalled its former lords. Though Crema and Cremona showed less spirit, their Venetian sympathies were well known, and the French hold upon them was insecure. Gaston de Foix would have to bestir himself, if the salvation of Bologna were not to be paid for by the loss of all the fruits of Agnadello, and Sanuto recorded in his *Diary* an incident which amusingly testified to the greatness of Venetian hopes. When Gritti set out to seize Brescia, the captain of a French post sent to ask a favour of a neighbouring Venetian officer, requesting that, when Brescia had been taken, he might be sent a pair of knives. The officer replied that the request should be complied with; and when Brescia had been entered, a pair of handsome knives was sent to the Frenchman, with an intimation that, if he should fancy anything from Bergamo, Crema, or Cremona, he had only to say so. The temptation to get even with the scornful invader must have been strong in every Italian breast, but possibly the Venetian would have denied himself his pleasantry, had he known what was to occur, when the bad news from Brescia should have come to Gaston's ears in distant Bologna.[1]

Brescia fell on 3rd February, and in a few days the event was known to the French commander-in-chief. Directly he heard of it, Gaston decided to leave 300 lances and 4,000 foot to protect Bologna against the enemy, and with the rest of his army to make a bid for the recovery of Brescia before the citadel should fall or the Venetians have time to establish themselves in the town. Two routes were open to him: one traversed the King's dominions, but was long and tedious; the other would reduce the march by four days, but it ran through Mantuan territory, traversed a district of lakes and swamps, and was controlled by fortresses held by Gonzaga's troops. It was not Gaston's way to play for safety when by boldness he might attain to greater things. Choosing the shorter route, he presented himself at the Mantuan frontier,

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, col. 459.

demanded a passage, and met with no resistance. Having crossed the Po at Stellata, he marched through Gonzaga's passes, and next day was at Nogara in the Veronese. A report of his coming was carried to a Venetian force operating under Baglione in the neighbourhood of Villafranca, but they refused to believe that he could have moved so quickly, and concluded that some body of German troops was on the move. They were undeceived next day when the French came up with them, defeated their infantry before the cavalry could come into action, and scattered the force with the loss of 200 men and 5 guns. 'I have lost everything,' complained the Paymaster of the beaten force; 'my cook, my butler, and a groom are missing; 1,600 or 1,800 ducats belonging to the Signory and all my own money have disappeared; my books and papers are lost; and I have not so much as a clean shirt to change into.' Such was the intelligence which suddenly disturbed the Venetians whilst they were still regarding with complacency their recent success at Brescia. Anxious Senators sat up late that night, to send warnings to Gritti, information to the Pope, and remonstrances to the lethargic Cardona. Wild rumours sped from mouth to mouth in circles that were less well informed, where some said that Brescia must fall, others that the French would be overtaken by the Spaniards, some criticized the Signory, some blamed its officers, others abused the Marquis of Mantua, and 'some said one thing and some another, awaiting news of what had really happened'.[1]

Unimportant in itself, the thing that had happened was serious in its consequences, for Gritti, who had gone to Brescia reluctantly, because he was alive to the danger of the undertaking, was thereby deprived of the guns and reinforcements for which he had asked, and would now have Gaston's army on his hands before other help could reach him. To Gaston, intent upon the recovery of his lost city, the defeat of Baglione's troops was no more than an incident of travel: without wasting time in pursuit of the fugitives he hurried on, and on 15th February was under the walls of Brescia. He had accomplished the long march from Bologna in nine days, and had come in the nick of time to save the

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 412–13; L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 266–70; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 472–7.

citadel, already hard pressed, despite the fact that Gritti for lack of powder had been unable to keep up a sustained bombardment. Partly to ensure its safety, and partly with a view to subsequent operations against Gritti, Gaston desired to introduce more men, and an attempt to do this was the first active measure taken after his arrival; but the Venetians, who were numerous and well supplied with arquebuses, frustrated the attempt, inflicting some damage, and capturing two small guns. Gaston then cleared a neighbouring eminence occupied by Avogadro's peasants, and sat down before the gates. He had already invited the city to surrender, urging it to submit to the clemency of the King of France rather than confront the horrors of a siege; but his offers and appeals, being intercepted by Gritti, had been withheld from the townspeople. Two days passed uneventfully, while the Venetians planned a simultaneous attack upon the French by themselves and their peasant allies, and Gaston made his dispositions for assaulting the city. Gaston was ready first. By the evening of 18th February he had decided on a plan, and towards midnight Gritti, who was patrolling his posts, was startled to hear the French drums sound the signal which bade the troops fall in. Asking what the signal could mean, he was assured that the French were minded to make for Bergamo and would soon be in retreat. The report satisfied him, and it was not until the next morning that he found out its falseness. What the activity in the French camp portended was another attempt to reinforce the citadel, and all that night a stream of men flowed into it under cover of darkness and pouring rain. The men had orders to rest and refresh themselves until dawn, when the city would be attacked simultaneously by all sections of the French force.

Gritti's corps consisted of 8,000 men; the townspeople were friendly to him; and Avogadro's levies in the environs numbered some ten or twelve thousand more men. Including the garrison of the citadel, Gaston had at his disposal a force about 12,000 strong, comprising 1,500 men-at-arms and 3,000 German 'landsknechte'. For the most part the force consisted of hardened veterans, who had conceived a devoted attachment to their intrepid young leader, and were ready to a man to lay down their lives at his bidding.

That nothing might be wanting to confirm their martial ardour, Gaston had promised them that, if they would capture the city first, they should be allowed to loot it afterwards; and when on the morning of the 15th he summoned them to action, every man in the ranks was intoxicated with the hope of plunder. Lest the men-at-arms should miss their footing on the rain-soaked ground, the general had ordered that they should take off their shoes, and he himself, setting the example, advanced barefoot to the assault at their head. It was about an hour after dawn when the storming parties moved forward. The French attacked with reckless valour, but the fury of their assault was matched by the obstinacy of the defence. The first body of men-at-arms was received with a murderous fire from the Venetian guns, ten or a dozen men falling at each discharge; but they marched on undaunted till nearly all were killed. They were followed by a corps of German and Gascon infantry, barefoot, like the men-at-arms, and armed only with lances; and these also the Venetians engaged and drove back. Then came more men-at-arms and more Gascons, and beneath the sustained and insistent pressure the Venetian resistance began to wilt. Fighting their way inch by inch, the French gradually pressed forward into the city. Here new perils awaited them, for the inhabitants, who had not at first taken part in the battle, now raised the cry of 'Marco! Marco!', and from roofs and windows men and women poured down stones and tiles and boiling water upon the troops below. But it was too late then for the defence to snatch victory out of defeat, and by the middle of the afternoon Brescia was in French hands.

Gritti with his staff was captured in the Piazza, where his head-quarters had been established, and whither he had betaken himself when he saw that the city was lost. During the attack he had displayed both energy and courage, going from point to point to animate the defence, and adjuring his men to seize the opportunity of freeing Italy from her tormentors. When things began to go badly for his side, his officers repeatedly urged him to escape while there was yet time; but he answered proudly that he would rather suffer death or capture than have it said of him that he had fled. Others were less chivalrous. Avogadro came to one of the

gates, had the drawbridge lowered against orders, and tried to escape, but only to find that the exit was guarded by a troop of French horse, who made him prisoner.[1] At another gate the Stradiots compelled the guard to open, but again the French were on the watch outside, and nearly all the fugitives were slain. Not only so, but the French mounted men gained an entrance by this gate, and a highly placed Venetian officer believed that, if the cavalry had not got in, it might have been possible even at that late hour to repel the assailants.[2]

No writer would willingly linger over the terrible tale of the sack of Brescia. Gaston's troops had been promised its plunder as the guerdon of victory, and for seven frightful days the conquered city was given over to the cruelty, lust, and greed of a rude and brutal soldiery. The carnage was horrible, and the streets ran with blood. Many French had themselves fallen in the first assault and in the subsequent fighting in the town. The exits being guarded, few of Gritti's men were able to escape, and not many were allowed to surrender. Every Brescian found with arms in his hands was slain at sight, and many other inhabitants of both sexes, who had given no provocation, shared the same fate. One Venetian officer related how he and his commander were spared by French men-at-arms, because, having received their pay the day before, they were able to offer ransoms of fifteen and twenty-five ducats apiece, and how their men, with no ransoms to offer, were cut down in cold blood before their eyes. It was told, too, how the peasants were slaughtered wholesale by the Germans, who called them 'dirty dogs of Venetians'. The Germans, said this witness, displayed a much greater cruelty than the French, for the French tried to arrest the carnage, whilst the Germans carried on their bloody work despite the protests of their comrades in arms. It was the practice of the Germans, said another witness, to exact a ransom when they took a prisoner,

[1] He was subsequently executed.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 472–7, 491, 498, 507, 512–13; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 413–15; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, pp. 516–18; 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 275–83; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 264–5.

and then, when it was paid, to slay the captive. It was not until late in the afternoon of the 19th, when Gaston made a proclamation that none should take life on pain of summary execution, that the slaughter ceased. How many met their deaths in the fighting and the subsequent slaughter it is hard to say; eye-witnesses estimated the total variously at twelve thousand, fifteen thousand, and twenty thousand souls; but there was one thing about which all were agreed, and this was that Brescia was a shambles, where it was impossible to walk in the streets without treading on the bodies of the slain.

Horrible as it was, the carnage was not the most revolting feature of the sack, for in the miserable city in the hour of its martyrdom 'atrocities were committed too horrible to relate', and 'things were done impossible to describe and terrible to recollect'. It was confessed of the Germans by one of their own number that they and the Gascons ran amuck, not only slaying indiscriminately and sparing neither women nor children, but breaking into monasteries and nunneries, torturing parents in the presence of their children, and violating women and girls before the eyes of their husbands and fathers. Priests, friars, and monks were held to ransom, as others testified, and nuns were raped after being dragged out from their convents. It was well for one noble Brescian lady and her two young daughters that Bayard should have been carried wounded into their house, and that his authority should have sufficed to preserve the honour of his fair and gentle nurses. As for the material spoils seized during that week of plunder, none ever knew the value of the booty torn from one of the richest towns in Lombardy, though some believed that it reached the staggering total of three million *écus*. Valuable plate, handsome furs, and exquisite silks were peddled by the troops, and there was a great demand for pack-animals, on which to carry the plunder to better markets. The extent of Brescia's misfortunes may be gauged by the fact, recorded by Sanuto, that within a few weeks of the sack some of her wealthiest citizens were begging alms of the Senate in Venice, being then wholly destitute of the means of subsistence, and being therefore thankful to accept a compassionate allowance of ten ducats apiece. It was small wonder that, with so terrible

an example before its eyes, Bergamo should be glad to pay an indemnity of 60,000 ducats to the French, to avoid being subjected to like treatment as a penalty for its defection.[1]

We may read in Sanuto's pages how the news of the Brescian tragedy came to Venice, plunging the city into a gloom which made it seem more like Holy Week than Carnival time. In the deaths of its men-at-arms, Stradiots, and infantry the Republic had to deplore the loss of the flower of its armies, and there was lively sympathy with Andrea Gritti, the brave general who had gone to Brescia against his own better judgement, and who was known to have urged upon the Government the adoption of more effective measures for its defence. That these measures should not have been taken was thought the less pardonable in that his demands had been moderate; for he had said that the place, being Venetian in sympathy, could be made safe with another 3,000 men. Thus with the sorrow on the lagoons there was mingled a lively indignation at the culpable inadequacy of the Government's precautions. It was the general opinion that it should not have been beyond their powers to send Gritti twice as many men as he had asked for, together with a substantial complement of guns. Men angrily asked what the Signory had done. It had enrolled no infantry; and whereas great quantities of munitions had been sent to the League camp, Gritti had received no more than four guns and a few barrels of powder. Its subjects declared in their sorrow and anger that the Signory had betrayed the Venetian cause, and speculated anxiously upon the probable consequences of that betrayal. Some supposed that there would be a battle between the French and the Spaniards, and felt no confidence in the issue, seeing that the Spaniards had sat still, when they might have pursued Gaston and saved Brescia. Others, more frankly pessimistic, anticipated a Spanish *débâcle*, the flight of the Pope, and a French occupation of Rome. 'In the midst of much troubled dis-

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 509, 513, 514–18, 522, 528, and vol. xiv, cols. 9, 32; *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, pp. 63–4; L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 290–5; 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 284–8; *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, pp. 516–18; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 265–6; Daru, *Histoire de Venise*, vol. iii, p. 418.

putation all were in the lowest spirits, seeing that the French are a brave race and masters of the art of war.'[1]

There was some substance in these complaints, but critics of the Signory took no account of two important considerations. The decisive factors in the Brescia campaign were the military genius of Gaston de Foix and the weakness or perfidy of the Marquis of Mantua in opening his passes to the French. Gaston could not have captured Brescia, had he found the citadel in Gritti's hands; the citadel must have surrendered, had the coming of the relieving force been delayed for another twenty-four hours; and the Mantuan short-cut had reduced its journey by a matter of four days. It was asserted by the plaintive Paymaster, to whose lamentations we have listened, that the deaths of the men who had fallen in the skirmish near Villafranca were 'to be laid to the charge of the Marquis of Mantua'.[2] There was an even stronger case for holding Gonzaga responsible for the far more terrible tragedy at Brescia. Machiavelli believed that Gonzaga had been taken unawares by the speed and unexpectedness of Gaston's movements, and, being overwhelmed by sudden perplexity, had given in to a demand which, as an ally of Julius and Venice and the father of a hostage in the Pope's hands, it would have been reasonable and proper for him to refuse. Such an opinion was charitable. It was not held by the Venetians, who roundly declared that Gonzaga's conduct had been the outcome of perfidy. It must be admitted that there is evidence to support that charge. Gonzaga had sent an agent, Soardino, who was known to the French, to place himself in touch with Gaston's officers, and this agent reported from Ostiglia on 11th February that he had spoken with La Palice and Lautrec, and that, many of the bridges which the French desired to use being 'rather poor affairs', he had commandeered men and materials to restore them. It follows from this that the way through Mantuan territory had been opened deliberately to the French; and there can be no question of the importance of that service. The Marquis himself declared that the district was one 'through which never army had marched within the memory of man', and he had enough experience

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 501, 507, vol. xiv, col. 17.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. xiii, col. 476.

of war to realize the consequences of throwing it open. The French were enabled to take the Venetians in the rear, were given the further advantage of a surprise attack, and were brought to Brescia in time to save the citadel and thereby ensure the capture of the town. 'The French captains themselves admitted that therein lay the main cause of their victory.' The theory that the Marquis had acted unadvisedly in a sudden and unforeseen emergency does not tally with his previous knowledge of the French intention to traverse his territory and his willingness, not merely to refrain from opposing their passage, but actively to facilitate it. And if he sinned, he sinned against the light, for Baglione, who had foreseen the danger, had adjured him to adopt a patriotic attitude. 'And this I say', were the concluding words of that commander's appeal, 'because it seems to me that the good name and fame of Italians suffer too much by constant compliance with the demands of these our deadly barbarian foes, especially when such weakness is shown by men of position and prowess, such as Your Highness. Bestir yourself, I beseech you, and with your wonted courage show a brave face to these French. Your obligations to the Church and to Venice so require, but much more so does your duty to Italy, whose fame, honour, and safety are in your hands, and who now looks chiefly to you for help and comfort, that she may be free.' [1]

The capture of Brescia produced no more than a temporary alleviation of the difficulties by which the French were confronted; indeed, those difficulties grew greater as the policy of Julius began to bear fruit. In the spring of 1512 France had to look forward to a time—and that time not far distant—when she would be encircled by a ring of enemies. In Italy, where she was already at grips with the power of the Holy League, she had no sure footing: the Milanese was disloyal; Bologna and Ferrara were a source of anxiety and expense; Florence, alienated by the affair of the Pisa Council, was conducting suspicious negotiations with Spain and the Pope. Grave fears were entertained lest there should be renewed trouble with the Swiss, amongst whom the pertinacious and persuasive Schiner was again at work;

[1] *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, pp. 60–1.

and early in March an ambassador from the Confederacy told the Venetians that, if the Signory would give them 20,000 ducats and the support of 500 lances, they would come and turn the French out of Milan. Ferdinand was planning an invasion on the Pyrenean frontier, in which England had undertaken to co-operate; and at the time when Gaston was marching from Bologna to Brescia, Henry VIII was telling his Parliament of French iniquities and of his intention to go to the aid of the Church. Moreover, there was every reason to fear that in the crisis of the struggle Louis XII would be deserted by his one ally.[1]

To detach the Emperor from France was a cherished aim of Spanish and Papal policy. That Maximilian was tending in the desired direction was demonstrated by his attitude towards the religious dispute. In the political sphere the obstacle to an agreement with the League was the refusal of Venice to admit his title to any part of the territory in dispute between them; but at the first indication that Maximilian might be won for the League Julius and Ferdinand resolved that, if necessary, they would coerce Venice into the concession of such terms as might soothe his wounded vanity. On 5th February the Venetian ambassador in Rome reported that the Pope was more bent than ever on Venice coming to an agreement with the Emperor, and wanted it the more, because Spain was insisting upon it. The two Venetian Cardinals, Grimani and Cornaro, had gone to Julius, and had tried to bring him to a different mind, but they had found him obdurate; he would not budge from the position that Venice might retain Friuli, but must give up Verona and Vicenza to the Emperor, seeing that it would then be possible to drive the French out of Italy. Nor, where the Cardinals had failed, could Campo Fregoso, a Venetian *condottiere*, prevail, though he had great influence with the Pope. 'Holy Father,' he had remonstrated, 'it is a bad thing that Venice should be weakened in purse and demesne by such an agreement as is proposed. Heaven alone knows how she has managed to meet the great expenses which she has already incurred. It is not proper that the foreigner should

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 416–19; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 9, 58.

be maintained in Italy at her expense.' Unable to contradict him, the Pope had answered: 'I cannot do otherwise. I must act as I am acting, because Spain requires that the agreement should be made on those terms.' In a Papal brief, which accompanied the ambassador's dispatch, Julius formally demanded that Venice should make terms with Maximilian on the lines proposed, threatening in case of her refusal to join with Ferdinand in a forcible recovery of the Emperor's possessions, and warning her that in that event she would have no one but herself to thank for any untoward consequences which might ensue.[1]

Confronted with these menaces, with the disaster at Brescia, and with renewed offers by the French to place the Emperor in occupation of the districts assigned to him by the treaty of Cambray, Venice thought it prudent to give way. Towards the end of February the Senate expressed their willingness to make a truce, and sent notice to Rome and Innsbruck to that effect. On 3rd March Julius heard from his representative in Venice that he and the Spanish ambassador had been in negotiation with the Senate, and had got them to agree to a peace with the Emperor on the basis of a cession of Vicenza. This was a great step forward, and Julius at once asked for the signature of an agreement; but it soon appeared that the difficulties were not yet surmounted. First, the Venetian ambassador said that he had no authority to sign. In consultation with the Spanish representative, however, the terms of a truce between Venice and the Emperor were negotiated, by which Venice was to pay 35,000 ducats, repayable by the Emperor, if the truce should not be followed by a peace; and to these terms the Venetian consented to put his name. But then it was necessary that the concurrence of Maximilian's agent should be obtained, and this diplomat proved to be more punctilious than his Venetian *confrère*. When asked by the Spanish ambassador to append his signature, he replied that he was instructed to sign a peace, and had no authority to sign a truce. Once more, therefore, the business was held up, and in the meantime there came letters from the Emperor to the agent, by which everything was upset, for the French had approached Maximilian after the fall of Brescia, and with

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 470–1.

many promises had begged him to refrain from any sort of agreement with Venice. In vain Julius blustered, foretelling general ruin, if the agreement were not signed. The agent was adamant: it seemed that Maximilian was lost. Yet within a fortnight it came to the knowledge of the Marquis of Mantua that the capricious monarch was making impossible demands of the King of France with the express object of finding a pretext for a breach.[1]

In these circumstances the best chance for the French was to deal a knock-out blow at one of their many enemies before the others were ready, and Louis impressed upon his general in Italy the need for dealing with the army of the League in such a way as to bring the war to a speedy end. Gaston replied that with 1,800 lances, 16,000 infantry, and a complement of guns he could drive the Spaniards from Italy and hunt the Pope's people back into Rome; and all Italy was soon aware of the French intention to seek a decision in Romagna. A note of warning was, indeed, sounded in Venice by a cautious official, who suggested that the open talk of operations in Romagna might cover some secret design against the Signory; it was always difficult, he said, to fathom the intentions of the French, for they were the sort of people who would make a feint at your head, and then kick you on the shin.[2] In this instance, however, the Papal Legate, Giovanni de' Medici, was assured by his secretary that the French meant what they said, and the secretary's information was derived from Pandolfini, the Florentine representative in Milan, who could be relied upon to know. Gaston de Foix, according to Pandolfini's report, was ordered to advance, get in touch with the army of the League, and bring on a battle; when he had won it, he was to occupy Romagna and the Papal States, which would be handed over to Cardinal San Severino to hold for the future Pope; and then the victorious army would march on to the conquest of Naples. This plan the French meant to carry out quickly, for they knew that the great preparations which were on foot in England and Spain boded them no good either in their Italian possessions or at home, felt sure that the Emperor would desert them and go over to the League, and

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, cols. 526–7, vol. xiv, cols. 24, 36.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. xiii, col. 523.

were very doubtful of the Swiss, though doing all they could to win them to their own side. They expected to have enough time, believing that England and Spain could not be ready to take the offensive till after May. To deal with the Papal army in the interval was their last hope, and they meant to make use even of their garrison troops in their determination to put into the field every man who could be marshalled beneath their standards in Italy.[1]

Conspicuous among Gaston de Foix's distinguishing characteristics were quickness of decision, rapidity of action, and an instant response to the call of duty, and in making that response he would no more think of sparing his men than he thought of sparing himself. For a few days the troops which had marched and fought during four arduous weeks were permitted to rest on Lombard soil, and then once more they were called upon to tramp through the wind and rain and mud of winter, marching southwards down the roads that led towards Romagna and the head-quarters of the League. By the end of the first week in March 600 lances, 6,000 foot, and 1,000 light horse had crossed the Po near Casalmaggiore, and other bodies had gone over the river at Cremona and elsewhere. On the 16th the commander-in-chief reached Finale, where he intended to review his men, expecting that he would be joined there by the reinforcements which Louis had been hurrying to his aid by sea and land. Nearer the scene of action he would also be joined by the Duke of Ferrara's forces, and the military importance of this contingent lay, not in its numbers, which were small, but in the Duke's possession of a superb artillery train, which was the more precious to Gaston in that his own guns could not be moved to a distant theatre over the sodden roads. The weather was still execrable, rain falling incessantly, and despite his impatience Gaston was held up at Finale for six days by the state of the roads, on which men and horses sank deep in mud and slush.[2]

The policy of the League Generals was to refuse for as

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 576–7.

[2] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 296–300; Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 419–20; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 23, 42; Siedersleben, *Die Schlacht bei Ravenna*, pp. 28–9.

long as possible the battle which the French were seeking, and that policy, dictated by the political interests of their several masters, harmonized well with their own inclination towards torpidity and procrastination. Since Gaston had driven them from Bologna in the beginning of February, they had lain inactive near Imola and Forlì, whither they had then retreated. To the indignation of the Signory and the fury of the Pope they had not made the smallest attempt to pursue the French or join the Venetians or resume the investment of Bologna. It was certain that they would not willingly meet Gaston in battle, especially so long as he might retain a superiority in numbers, of which the hoped-for arrival of Schiner's Swiss would deprive him. The plan favoured by the Spanish Viceroy was to keep his forces in the hilly district at the foot of the Apennines, where the French could not use their cavalry and guns, and thus, if they should venture to attack, must do so at a disadvantage. Fabrizio Colonna pleaded in vain for the adoption of tactics which he thought more calculated to impede the French. His plan was to leave Imola fortified and take up a position at Lugo or Bagnacavallo on the line of the French advance: if the French were to attack there, they would have to do so under great disadvantage from defiles, swamps, and rivers; and if they were to march against Imola, the League generals could call to their aid the garrisons of all the strong places in the neighbouring hills. It was singularly unfortunate for the army of the League that the advice of the enterprising Italian cavalry leader should invariably run counter to the cautious counsels of Pedro Navarro, who led the Spanish foot, and that the Viceroy should as invariably fall in with the views of his own compatriot.[1]

The Fabian strategy favoured by Cardona and his lieutenant was aided by one circumstance of considerable importance. Whereas the League army could be victualled by three different routes, and felt no anxiety about supplies, the French could be provisioned only by way of the Po from Lombardy, and therefore drew their rations by a long and vulnerable line of communications from a province so much wasted by marauding troops as to be incapable of furnishing

[1] Guicciardini, *op. cit.*, pp. 420–2; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiii, col. 526, vol. xiv, 177; L. da Porto, *op. cit.*, pp. 296–8; Siedersleben, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–32.

their needs. A quick decision was thus demanded of the French as forcibly by difficulties of commissariat as by the exigencies of the political situation. Advancing from Finale at the beginning of the last week in March, Gaston occupied the very position near Lugo and Bagnacavallo in which the army of the League would already have been established, had Fabrizio Colonna had his way. On 1st April the French were at Mordano, and their enemies were at Castel Bolognese, not many miles to the south. For a day or two Gaston manœuvred in the hope of bringing Cardona to battle. Finding that the Spaniard was not to be drawn, he then decided to move on Ravenna, supposing rightly that the enemy must do something to save a place important in itself, rich in provisions, and not to be lost without a shattering blow to the prestige of the League.

Four centuries have worked great changes in the surroundings of Ravenna, where an unceasing process of alluvial deposit has altered the whole aspect of the land. To-day the Montone and the Ronco, the two streams which rise in the hills between Romagna and Tuscany, and flow thence north-eastwards towards Ravenna, unite about a mile to the south of the town, whence a single channel carries their mingled waters eastwards to the sea. In 1512 these streams ran in courses which ever converged, but never met, until they flowed to north and south past Ravenna, whose walls were lapped by their waters. The city then was at no great distance from the sea, and was set in a circle of pine wood and swamp, the swamp intersected by rivulets and canals, the pine wood of great extent and a notable legacy from the Augustan age. At the time when Gaston de Foix decided to make the place his objective, the garrison of Ravenna was small, but the place itself was strong. Heavily fortified two years before, the citadel with its walls, moats, bulwarks, and battlements was as impregnable as it could be made by the engineering science of the day. Two bronze falconets, twenty-five spingardes, twenty-seven mortars, two big guns on the towers, and smaller weapons posted above the gates stood ready to bid defiance to an assailant. They would be speaking soon, for Gaston was at hand. Leaving Cotignola on 2nd April, he entered the territory of Russi, a little state west of Ravenna, disposed of a small Spanish force which

attempted to stop his progress, and, after destroying the town, continued his eastward march. On 8th April he appeared under the walls of Ravenna, and by the evening of that day was making his preparations for a siege. Troops sent from the army of the League at Imola had entered the city as he approached, for his threat had spurred the League leaders to action, and a belated reinforcement of 100 lances and 500 Spanish foot had been dispatched in desperate haste under the command of Marc'Antonio Colonna, Fabrizio's nephew. Marc'Antonio went in no very confident mood, refusing to move until he had received explicit undertakings by the Viceroy, the Papal Legate, and all the captains of the League army to come to his relief, if the French should attack him.

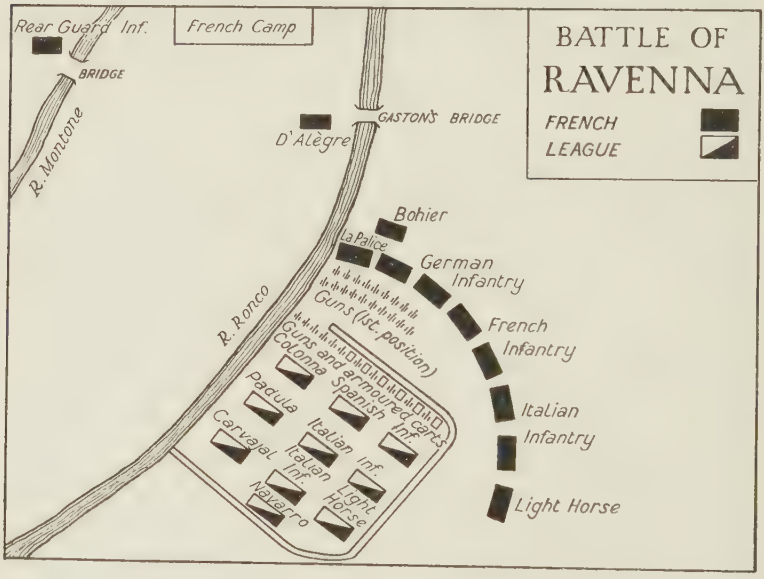
On his march from Russi Gaston had crossed the Montone, and on nearing Ravenna he took up a position opposite the Porta Adriana in the space between the two streams. That night he put his guns in position, some against the tower in the section of wall between the rivers, and some on the left bank of the Montone, over which a part of the troops were sent by an old bridge. There was little time to lose, for not only had he news that Cardona and all his forces were now on the move, but also his commissariat arrangements were being disturbed by Venetian activities on the Po, and the question of supplies was becoming acute. After a brief bombardment on the morning of Good Friday, 9th April, he gave orders for an assault, stiffening his infantry with an admixture of dismounted men-at-arms, and offering rewards to all who should signalize themselves by their valour. The men fought with determined courage, repeatedly returning to the attack under a heavy fire from the walls; but Colonna's defence was skilful, and every time they were beaten back. After a fierce struggle of three hours' duration the attack had to be called off by reason of the exhaustion of the troops and the growing tale of loss. Though unsuccessful, the assault had served its purpose, for Colonna, menaced by the French from without and by the disaffection of the citizens from within, had sent to Cardona an urgent appeal for assistance, and the army of the League was moving up to the relief of the beleaguered city.

The Allied army, which had marched southwards when

the French moved against Ravenna, lay encamped between Faenza and Forlì, when a courier came in with Marc'Antonio's message. Leaving much of their baggage behind, they left this camp on Thursday, 8th April, crossed the Ronco, intending to recross it lower down, approached Ravenna by the right bank of the river on Good Friday, the 9th, the day of the French assault, and halted that evening some four miles from the French position, firing signal guns to acquaint the garrison with their presence near at hand. They thought that their approach would suffice to deliver Ravenna from its peril, and that there was therefore no need either to march into the town or to attempt to take the French in a trap between the town, the rivers, and their own forces. It soon appeared, however, that this confidence was misplaced, and that more active measures would be required, if Ravenna were to be saved, for despite Cardona's proximity the townspeople on the morning of Saturday, the 10th, sent to the French head-quarters to ask for terms of surrender. Cardona seems to have got wind of these overtures: at all events he moved forward again, marching in battle order and with parties of horse thrown out on the French bank of the Ronco; nor did he halt till he was within sight of the French camp. As he approached, parties of his horse on the French side of the river were engaged by Gaston's cavalry, and Fabrizio Colonna was obliged to go over and extricate them, to prevent the development of a serious engagement in conditions unfavourable to his own side. Whilst Colonna was thus occupied, the whole French army was brought out in battle order, and the guns, which had been bombarding Ravenna, were turned about and trained on the advancing army. Thus the rival armies stood under arms until sundown, when the enemy began to encamp on one side of the river, and the French withdrew to their old position on the other.

On the right bank of the Ronco, at a spot some two miles south of Ravenna, between the point of its present confluence with the Montone and the hamlet of Molinaccio, there stands to-day a memorial which was erected in the middle of the sixteenth century, and is known variously as the Colonna dei Francesi or the Colonna di Gaston de Foix. On this spot the army of the League encamped on Easter

Eve 1512. The arrangement of the camp and the disposition of the troops within it were the work of Pedro Navarro, whose aim was to take up a defensive position impervious to French attack. This object he was confident that he could achieve by a judicious use of the steep banks of the Ronco, of entrenchments such as had protected Gonsalvo against the French *gendarmerie* at Cerignola, and of armoured carts constructed upon the model of those of which he had read in



accounts of classical warfare; and his confidence seemed to be justified by the fact that in this period defensive tactics were immensely aided by the use of fire-arms, to which the correct tactical reply had not been evolved. From the high embankment or levee, by which the waters of the Ronco were confined to their channel in times of flood, he made a trench, which ran eastwards at right angles to the river, then turned southwards, and finally ran back westwards until it rejoined the embankment: the trench, which was dug as broad and deep as time allowed, thus made three sides of a quadrangular encampment, of which the fourth side was formed by the river with its levee and drainage ditch. As the French lay to the northward near Ravenna and must approach from

that side, the northern face of the quadrangle would form the front of the Allied position. Here, therefore, Navarro left a space of about fifteen yards between the levee and the beginning of his trench, to serve as a means of egress from the camp; and it was along the northern section of trench that he placed his guns and armoured carts. Some of the guns, which numbered between twenty and thirty in all, he mounted on the levee, where their elevated position would give them a greater effective range. The rest of the guns and all the armoured carts he disposed at intervals along the northern section of trench; the carts, about thirty in number, were light two-wheeled vehicles, carrying arquebuses, and bristling with lances and scythe-like blades; and Navarro relied upon them to provide a formidable element in the defensive strength of his position.

Within his circumvallation his forces would be disposed as follows, when the moment for battle should come. On the left wing, next to the levee and behind the guns, would be placed three cavalry squadrons, one behind the other: first, Fabrizio Colonna's cavalry, a *corps d'élite* of some 700 men-at-arms in superb accoutrements; behind these the 600 lances of the 'battle' under the Viceroy and the Marquis della Padula; and, last, the 500 lances of the rear-guard under a Spanish officer, Alfonso Carvajal. On Fabrizio Colonna's right two divisions of Spanish foot, each about 3,000 strong, would man the rest of the northern trench, being drawn up behind the armoured carts; behind them would stand two Italian infantry divisions, numbering some 4,000 men; and behind these again would come the rest of the Italian infantry, perhaps as many as another 3,000 men in all. A thousand or fifteen hundred light horse, stationed to the rear of the right flank, would be charged with the duty of protecting that flank and of acting as a general reserve. Pedro Navarro would also hold himself in reserve at the head of 1,500 picked foot, with whom he could intervene at any critical point. He refused to listen, when Fabrizio Colonna urged that the right course was to advance under cover of night and stealthily take up a position opposite Gaston's bridge, thereby making it impossible for the French to cross the river without being taken at a disadvantage. Colonna had the cavalry leader's instinctive dislike of immobility

behind defence works, Navarro the 'scientific' soldier's rooted conviction that it is better to put your trust in fortifications and material equipment than to go into the open, relying on advantage of position or the spirit of the troops.

When Gaston de Foix saw what the enemy were doing, he called his officers together in his tent, and asked them to advise him what it would be best for his own army to do. The officers were of different opinions, for there were obvious drawbacks to every plan. To the suggestion that the assaults upon Ravenna should be resumed it was objected that the breach was still small, that there was no reason to anticipate success where they had already encountered failure, and that it would be the height of folly to risk an unsuccessful assault with a powerful army waiting near by to fall upon them in the rear. To the proposal that Ravenna should be besieged without being assaulted it was answered that the plan could serve no useful end, and was in any event ruled out by the shortness of supplies, which grew daily worse, and had already attained the point of scarcity. Proposals for a retirement had their advocates, but opponents argued that retreat was always shameful, and in present conditions could not even be regarded as safe. There was a fourth possibility—an offensive against the fortified encampment of the Allied army—and although to the more cautious minds of the older men this project appeared to be impracticable, it was eventually carried by the inspiring advocacy of the generous youth who led the host. In a dispatch written from the camp on the day of the battle Pandolfini penned a report of Gaston's words, and despite the tendency of contemporary writers to adorn their pages with rhetorical flights of fancy his version may be regarded as approximating to an accurate summary of an actual speech. It was thus, according to the ambassador, that Gaston won the assent of the council of war to his bold, and even rash, proposal.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'you see that we have lost all hope of winning the town, partly because of the defence put up by those within, and partly because of the hopes which they place in those without. We are short of food, and have little chance of making good our deficiencies. Therefore we must choose between two alternatives: either we must retire upon Bologna, or we must fight the enemy. It would be ignomini-

ous to retreat. Moreover, it would be manifestly prejudicial to our sovereign's interests, since we should suffer in the estimation alike of the enemy and of our subject peoples; and with the former confident and the latter disloyal His Majesty's dominions would go to ruin. Yet, go we to battle, that way too danger lies, for we must seek out the enemy in the midst of his entrenchments. Of that difficulty I will undertake to get the better by the quality and the quantity of my troops, if you for your parts will but be men. For my part, I could never hesitate to choose a course of action which may lead to victory, when by so doing I avoid the certainty of defeat and shame.'[1]

If we are to believe the writer who under the name of the 'Loyal Serviteur' recorded the doughty deeds of the 'Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche', there was another and a compelling reason for deciding upon a battle, however great the risk. The Emperor, says this writer, was preparing to desert the French, and a letter from him had just reached the camp, in which he forbade Gaston's German mercenaries to go into action against Cardona's Spanish foot. The mercenaries had two leaders, and the letter came to the hands of one of them, Jakob von Ems, who was French in sentiment, devoted to Gaston, and an ardent admirer of Bayard. Struck by this bolt from the blue, the faithful Jakob went off to Bayard, and consulted him in his perplexity: he was a loyal officer of King Louis, he said, and was ready to die in his service; at present no one knew of the letter but himself, and he did not mean to show it, lest his men should refuse to fight; but it was possible that the Emperor had written in similar terms to his brother officers, and that these letters would presently arrive; therefore it would be well that the commander-in-chief should give battle without delay. Bayard replied tactfully, praising Jakob's conduct, and holding out hopes of great reward. Then he carried him off to the council of war, and there explained to Gaston how the army was in danger of being deprived of the flower of its infantry; whereupon Gaston resolved to engage the enemy without further loss of time.

Such is the story told by Bayard's biographer, a story

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 582–3.

which historians for the most part have either repeated without comment or omitted without explanation. To one writer, who has examined it critically, the tale appears improbable. He thinks that it originated in the tendency of the 'Loyal Serviteur' to exaggerate his master's importance, that is, in the desire of hero-worshipper to make his hero appear more worshipful; he distrusts the double coincidence of the letter coming into the hands of Jakob von Ems and of Jakob being the friend of Bayard; and he remarks that, whilst it may be true that Maximilian was thinking of deserting Louis, there is no evidence to show that he had reached a decision before Ravenna or that any such letter ever came from his pen. To this it may be added that, if the impending defection of the 'landsknechte' had indeed been amongst the causes which induced Gaston to hurry on a battle, the circumstance must almost certainly have been known to Pandolfini, who not less certainly would have dwelt upon it in his report. On the other hand, the 'Loyal Serviteur's' guileless biography is not of a kind to invite disbelief. It may be that the truth lies between two extremes, and that the faithful Jakob, observing the wind to sit in a new quarter, and being acquainted with the capacity of the Imperial weathercock for rapid gyration, suggested as a potential risk what Bayard or his biographer came later to assert as an actual and pressing danger.[1]

Whatever the motives for their decision, the French had resolved to take the offensive, and by dawn next morning, the morning of Easter Sunday, 11th April 1512, their whole camp was astir. During the night a bridge had been thrown over the Ronco about a mile below the Allied camp, and in the same locality a section of the high river banks had been levelled, to render the stream more readily fordable. Not all the troops were to go over, for Gaston had decided to leave two bodies on his own side of the river: one, of a thousand foot, was to guard the bridge over the Montone; and to the other, led by Yves d'Alègre, and composed of four hundred men-at-arms and a small body of infantry, was assigned the threefold duty of guarding the Ronco bridge, preventing a sortie by the garrison of Ravenna, and acting as a general

[1] 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 299–301; Siedersleben, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–40.

reserve to the troops in action. No drums were beaten or trumpets blown as the men fell in; but concealment was impossible, for the distance between the camps was so small that every movement in each could be seen from the other; nor, as it chanced, was concealment necessary, for on Navarro's advice the Viceroy had decided to offer no opposition to the crossing of the river beyond a long-distance bombardment. First, the infantry of the advance-guard were sent over the Ronco, then the artillery, to reply to Cardona's guns, and then the men-at-arms. The privilege of crossing by the bridge was assigned to the German foot, and as they marched briskly forward, a French infantry captain, Molart, called to his troops: 'How now, my men, are the Germans to approach the enemy before we do? For my part, sooner than suffer such a reproach, I would lose one of my eyes'; and with that he dashed into the water and began to feel for the ford. Gaston himself went over after sharing with his staff such provisions as could be found in his tent, where a meagre larder contained no more than one flask of wine and a single loaf of bread.

The object of the French was to bring the enemy to battle without having recourse to the costly expedient of storming his entrenchments, and Gaston's dispositions showed that he had a sound grasp of strategical principles, for he advanced with his men drawn up crescent-wise on an extended front, so as to envelop the right wing of the opposing army. The cavalry were thrown forward on the wings, the heavy cavalry on the right opposite Colonna, and the light horse on the left, whilst the infantry were marshalled along the recessed centre. On the extreme right, next to the river, were the *gendarmerie* of the advance-guard, consisting of some 800 lances under the command of La Palice; on their left came the 6,000 'landsknechte' of Jakob van Ems; then 8,000 Gascon archers and Picard pikemen; then 5,000 Italian infantry under Federigo da Bozzoli and two Scottish captains; and, finally, on the extreme left the second cavalry division, consisting of 2,000 light horse and 1,000 mounted archers. Behind the cavalry division of La Palice on the right were drawn up the 600 lances of the 'battle', and along the right front were posted the Ferrarese guns, the latter no less than fifty in number, for they were a weapon specially dear to

Duke Alfonso, who owned more of them than all the Princes of Italy. In the ranks of the cavalry of the 'battle', led by Thomas Bohier, Général des Finances of Normandy, stood the two hundred gentlemen of the King's bodyguard; and here, too, was stationed Cardinal San Severino, Legate of the Pisa Council, his massive frame clad from head to foot in gleaming armour, and in that strange garb seeming amply to deserve the reproach which Guicciardini levelled at him, when he called him 'a Cardinal of fierce disposition, inclined rather to arms than to priestly exercises or thoughts'.[1] Like Navarro, who in all but name was the leader of the rival host, the French commander-in-chief took up no fixed position, but at the head of a little band of noble companions held himself in readiness to intervene wherever a bold heart, a strong arm, or a wise or cheerful word might turn the fortune of the day.

It was between eight and nine o'clock in the morning when Gaston's dispositions were completed, and the French line began to move forward under fire from the enemy guns. Halting within two hundred paces of the trench, the French brought their own guns into action, so beginning an artillery duel of two hours' duration, the longest and fiercest bombardment ever known till then upon a field of battle. For a time the honours in this struggle were more or less easy, for the troops of the League were partly protected by their defence works against the bigger, more numerous, and better-served guns of the French, whilst the guns and arquebuses of the League, though fewer and worse manned, were disposed to greater advantage on the levee and on Navarro's armoured carts, whence they poured a deadly fire into the unprotected masses of the French. The French and German infantry bore the brunt of the cannonade, their casualties from this cause being estimated at 2,000 men; their losses were particularly heavy among the officers, who, standing conspicuous in their richest dress before the ranks, offered a splendid target to the Spanish gunners; and it is related that, as two officers stood together to share a drink, one cannon ball laid them both low. In this ordeal of immobile submission to punishment the infantry began to lose its morale; a part grew nervous, and a part restive; and the

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, p. 420.

objects of the rival armies being what they were, namely, for the French to lure the enemy into the open and for the Allied army to compel a French attack upon its fortifications, it seemed at this point as though it were Navarro who had gained his end by compelling Gaston to advance perilously or retreat with shame. And then to one of the officers of the French high command—to Gaston himself, most probably, or perhaps to his colleague, the Duke of Ferrara—there came one of those tactical inspirations by which battles are decided. Some of the French guns being left to keep up the bombardment from their original position in front of La Palice's cavalry on the river bank, the rest were withdrawn, pulled round behind the front, and brought into action again on the extreme left, where the mounted archers, who formed the tip of the French crescent, were extended so as partially to envelop the enemy's right flank. By this disposition the enemy lines were caught between two fires, and one of these was an enfilading fire, against which their defence works gave little or no cover. By moving his men to the lower ground near the levee and there ordering them to lie down, Navarro was able to give his infantry adequate protection against the new peril, but no such escape was possible for the mounted troops. The guns were well served; their fire was continuous and rapid; a storm of shot swept the camp; the men-at-arms began to fall; their steeds grew restive, and threatened to become uncontrollable. Ere long many hundred saddles were emptied of their riders, and so deadly did the enfilading fire seem to be that it was believed afterwards on the supposed authority of Colonna himself that there were times when as many as thirty men were mown down by a single shot. No troops could long endure to be the passive victims of such a butchery.

Fabrizio Colonna realized the gravity of the situation. The murmurs from the suffering ranks reached his ears; he could hear his men swearing that they were not going to stand still much longer to perish miserably of cannon shot, but would go out against the enemy, and die, if die they must, with their swords in their hands. He represented to the Viceroy that something ought to be done to put an end to the cascade of shot, and suggested that the light horse under the Marquis of Pescara should be sent out to bring

on an engagement. Cardona adopted his advice in a modified form. The rear-guard under Carvajal were the first to move, and after them the Marquis della Padula was sent with the cavalry of the 'battle', and with Pescara's light horse in support, to attack the French cavalry division under Bohier, which had moved up to fill a gap in the French centre, where the infantry had shifted their ground during the artillery duel. The object of the attackers was to pierce the French line by breaking up the 'battle', but, already partially disordered before the movement began, they were thrown into further confusion in the course of an advance over ground made difficult by dykes and scrub, and, failing in their object, they became involved in a grim hand-to-hand struggle. Seeing the disorder of his colleagues' charge, and anticipating its failure, Colonna urged upon Navarro that the time had come for a general advance, lest the several divisions of the Allied army should be destroyed piecemeal. Navarro refused to stir, either resenting the interference of the brilliant *condottiere* with whom he had so often been at loggerheads, or fearing to sanction a movement which would uncover the entrance to the camp. His patience exhausted, and his anxiety increasing, Colonna took matters into his own hands, and led his men out against the French vanguard, which faced his own squadron. As a result there were then two separate cavalry engagements, which continued for a time side by side. Colonna's men bore themselves like the veterans they were, and as for their opponents, never in all its splendid history had the finest *gendarmerie* in Europe surpassed the achievements of this fateful day. That victory should at last incline to the French side was due to another happy inspiration on the part of one of their leaders. When the cavalry of the League had first come out against the 'battle', La Palice on his own initiative or on the orders of Gaston de Foix had detached some of his men to go to the aid of Bohier, and at the same time had sent back a message to Yves d'Alègre, summoning the reserves to the field. D'Alègre crossed the Ronco, and in the crisis of the struggle with Colonna his 400 lances came galloping along the river bank and plunged into the fray. Attacked simultaneously in front, flank, and rear, Colonna's men wavered, broke, and fled. The French vanguard cavalry were thus set free to go

to the aid of their comrades of the main division, where the rest of the League cavalry then found themselves attacked on all sides at once, and were presently driven from the field. Pescara, whose horse had been killed under him, was left for dead upon the ground; the Marquis della Padula was captured; and of the rank and file few escaped save for a part of the rear-guard under Carvajal, which made off in the direction of Cesena. To these fugitives the squadron of cavalry under Cardona, which had remained behind in the camp, ingloriously joined themselves, the Viceroy, as was scathingly said of him, preferring rather to flee at their head than to enter into any competition of bravery with his men. Only the gallant Colonna with the broken remnants of his veterans remained upon the field where now the rival infantries contended fiercely for supremacy.

About the time when the cavalry of the League first sallied out from their camp, Gaston de Foix, who had observed the demoralizing effect of the bombardment upon his infantry, was preparing to let those troops go forward against the enemy entrenchments. The foot advanced in two bodies; one body, composed of the German 'landsknechte', delivered a direct attack against the trench in front of them, and another body, consisting of 2,000 Gascon crossbowmen and 1,000 Picard pikemen, was sent to work its way forward at another point and effect a diversion by attacking the enemy in flank. Reserving his own Spaniards to deal with the German offensive, Navarro detailed his Italian infantry to meet the subsidiary attack, and the Gascons and Picards were soon hotly engaged with these Italian troops, of whom they began gradually to get the better; but when it was seen that the Italians were giving way, some of the Spanish foot advanced to their aid, and with the intervention of these veterans the struggle assumed a new aspect. The Gascons wavered under the shock of the Spanish counter-attack, then began to fall back, and presently turned in flight, with the Spaniards in pursuit; and it was only after a vigorous charge by d'Alègre's horse that the disorganized infantry could be rallied and reformed. Meanwhile a yet fiercer contest was in progress along the trench, where the flower of the Spanish infantry were at grips with the brave and experienced 'landsknechte'. Holding back their fire during the enemy advance, the

Spanish arquebusiers permitted the Germans to cross the trench, and then opened fire upon them at close range. The men fell thick in the German ranks, and the casualties were especially numerous among the officers, who were leading the attack; but pressing on undismayed, the 'landsknechte' reached the Spanish ranks, and a fierce fight began among the armoured carts. The issue of this struggle was still in doubt when a body of French infantry, which had been sent up in support of the Germans, but had not crossed the trench, was charged and dispersed by a party of Colonna's horse. Already heavily punished, the 'landsknechte' lost heart when they found themselves bereft of support, and, abandoning their offensive, began to fall back across the trench. Colonna afterwards declared that, if only in this moment he could have found two hundred lances to follow him into action, he could have wrested victory out of defeat; and there can be no doubt that with the Gascons demoralized, the Germans shaken by heavy losses, and the Spanish veterans flushed with success the situation would have been ugly for the French, had it not been for the fortunate issue of the earlier cavalry engagements. Whereas Colonna in his need for help looked in vain to the cavalry of the League, who were defeated and in flight, and equally in vain appealed to the Italian infantry, who had no stomach for so bloody a battle, the French leaders were enabled by the course of events to concentrate all their efforts and make use of every arm in meeting the menace of the Spanish success. Parties of French horse were called together and marshalled for another charge; the Duke of Ferrara was summoned from his guns; the shaken infantry were steadied by the presence of Gaston, who threw himself amongst them and in cheering tones called upon them for one effort more; and then at one and the same moment and from all directions at once horse and foot were hurled in a supreme effort against the Spanish ranks. Yielding to a pressure which no troops could have withstood, Navarro's veterans fell slowly back, and with ranks still unbroken three thousand men, the heroic remnant of the army of the League, marched away down the levee on the road to Forlì. In the camp which they had evacuated the victors fell to upon the abundant victuals which had been left behind, and which seemed for the moment to

weary and hungry men to be the most precious fruit of victory.

The losses on both sides were very heavy, and it was generally agreed that there had been no such carnage in Italy for centuries. 'Never', said one eyewitness, 'was there so cruel a sight as the scene of the conflict, where men, dead and half dead, might be seen lying in heaps, buried beneath horses and accoutrements, and all the plain for the space of six miles was full of the corpses of those whom the archers had struck down.'[1] It was commonly believed at the time that the casualties amounted to as many as 18,000, 20,000, or even 24,000 in all; but in a matter in which no certain conclusion can be reached it is wiser to accept the more moderate estimate of those who put the slain at about 10,000, of whom at least one third were thought to be French. On both sides there had been great mortality among the officers, and the casualties among them had been especially numerous in the French army, where many had fallen during the preliminary bombardment, and many more had gallantly sacrificed their lives in leading the German attack and in re-forming the broken Gascon ranks. In the Allied ranks, though many gentlemen had fallen, the bulk of the loss had occurred among the rank and file, and here it was rather in the lists of prisoners that the distinguished names were found. Pedro Navarro tried to flee when he saw that all was lost, but was taken, severely wounded, by Ettore Romano, one of the famous band who had upheld the honour of Italy in the lists near Trani. Fighting bravely to the last, the gallant Colonna was captured while protecting the retirement of the Spanish foot: his horse had been killed under him, and he himself had been wounded, when he recognized the Duke of Ferrara among his pursuers, and offered him his sword. The Marquis of Pescara, who had led out the light horse, had been left for dead upon the field; the Marquis della Padula, who had ridden at the head of the heavy cavalry division, had been captured during the engagement; and the Marquis of Bitonto was also among the prisoners. Some French archers had intercepted Cardinal de' Medici, the Papal Legate, as he attempted to escape from the field, and

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 586.

had led him to Cardinal San Severino, the representative of the Pisa Council. The guns, the baggage, the camp equipment, and most of the standards of the army of the League became the spoils of victory.

Numerically inferior to those of the enemy, the French losses were more severe in the quality of the fallen. Of the distinguished band which had led the troops to victory on the hard-fought field few survived but the Duke of Ferrara and the Sieur de Lautrec, and of these Lautrec did not come unscathed from the conflict. Many of the cavalry leaders had fallen in the *mêlée*. Careless of his own life after his son had been cut down before his eyes, Yves d'Alègre had gone to the aid of the Gascons, and in a furious charge against the Spanish foot had found the death which he seemed to court. Molart, best known and best beloved of all the infantry captains, had also succumbed in the Gascon *débâcle*. A lifeless body arrayed in the uniform of a 'landsknecht' captain marked the spot where Bayard's friend and comrade, the faithful Jakob von Ems, had led his men across the trench against the Spanish pikes and guns. In every infantry company in the French ranks—among the Germans, among the Gascons, and among the Picards—officers of less note than these had laid down their lives in dozens at the call of duty and in devoted service to their beloved chief. That this brilliant young soldier should also be among the slain was immeasurably the greatest loss of all, a loss in its nature so tragic and in its results so disastrous that Bayard spoke no more than the truth when he declared that it had turned victory into defeat. Exactly in what way and at what moment of the fight Gaston de Foix was killed is shrouded in the uncertainty in which many features of the famous battle are enveloped. The traditional account is that, when the young leader saw the unbeaten remnant of the Spanish infantry retreating in good order from the field, he galloped after them at the head of a mere handful of companions, charged recklessly, and fell riddled with wounds from many pikes. This account has the authority of Bayard[1] to support it, but it conflicts with the testimony of others who were present at the battle, and who say that Gaston met his death in rallying his beaten infantry or in counter-attacking

[1] 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, p. 434.

the enemy infantry in the crisis of the fight. Pandolfini, the Florentine ambassador, wrote that Gaston advanced to encourage the defeated Gascons, and in an attempt to arrest the progress of the enemy was unhorsed and slain by the Spanish foot.[1] Jacopo Guicciardini told his brother, the historian, that Gaston de Foix, Yves d'Alègre and his son, and other leaders had all met their deaths when attacking the Spanish infantry during the battle.[2] A similar report was made by Giovanni da Fino, a Ferrarese official attached to Cardinal San Severino, who related that the French general had been slain by the enemy foot while trying to rally his own infantry, who were giving way.[3] These versions are consistent with one another, and also tally with the unquestionable fact that it was for such an emergency as the Gascon *débâcle* that the general had held himself in readiness to intervene with his picked band. One would willingly believe that there was no rash act of useless self-sacrifice to enhance the pitifulness of the tragic death; for that the premature loss of the brilliant young soldier was, indeed, a tragedy could be doubted by none who had any appreciation of the greatness of his meteoric career.

'The victory has been robbed of all its joy in French eyes by the death of M. de Foix, who for the qualities which he had actually displayed and for the promise of still greater things which he had shown was beloved of his men and admired of all the world.' So wrote Pandolfini from the camp under the stress of emotion, and his eulogy is repeated and emphasized in the calm and considered judgement of a critical modern mind. In the opinion of M. Henry Lemonnier, 'the campaign of Gaston de Foix presents many remarkable features. It was not, as has been alleged, a revelation of the rôle of infantry, not even from the point of view of rapidity of marching, though it might certainly be claimed as a more striking demonstration of a value already proved; and whilst attention might more aptly be called to the happy

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *op. cit.*, p. 585.

[2] *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. xv, p. 311.

[3] O. Tommasini, *La vita e gli scritti di Niccolò Machiavelli*, vol. i, p. 706. 'Some say', wrote an Italian in the French service, 'that the Gascons themselves slew him, to secure his doublet, which was reputed to be worth thousands of *écus*. This I do not know for certain, but it is so said': Vignati, 'Cronaca,' *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series II, vol. i, p. 618.

use of artillery, yet the decisive part was still played by the men-at-arms. That which was really new was Gaston's military genius. Variety in the means employed; extreme prudence coupled with dazzling rapidity; a decision in the initiative which combined firmness with something akin to inspiration, and a precision in movement of which the like had not been seen before; cleverness in confining effort within the bounds of real utility; a remarkable skill in multiplying instruments by economy in their use; a just appreciation of the value of time; an astonishing grasp of strategy and tactics—these were some of the prominent traits. They are discernible in his campaign against the Swiss, when he contrived both to avoid battle and, still more, to refrain from pursuit; in his expedition against Bologna, which he saved as it were by a touch of his wing; in his return against the Venetians; and, lastly, in the tactical skill of the campaign against the Spaniards and in the crushing blow of Ravenna: in a word, in his threefold use of one single army. In that respect no man was ever more in advance of his time; none ever foreshadowed more clearly such men as Turenne, Frederick, and Napoleon.'[1]

News of the disaster at Ravenna reached Rome quickly, and spread consternation in the Papal Court. Terrified Cardinals hurried to the Pope's side, and besought him to make peace with the King of France before the victorious enemy should appear under the walls of his defenceless city. They urged that he had done enough for honour, and must leave in the hands of God the protection of His spouse, the Church. Against these craven counsels the ambassadors of Spain and Venice protested with vigour. The situation, they argued, was not as desperate as timorous priests painted it: the army of the League might have been defeated, but had not been destroyed, for Cardona with part of the cavalry had escaped from the field, and the Spanish infantry had retired unbroken and undismayed; disordered by their losses and restrained by their fear of the Swiss, the French would be unable to advance quickly on Rome; and even if the worst should happen, it would be more honourable and more prudent in Julius to withdraw to Naples or Venice, and give

[1] *Histoire de France*, ed. Lavisse, vol. v, part i, p. 104. For authorities for the battle of Ravenna see the note at the end of this chapter.

time to the powers to rally to his support, than to submit tamely to the certain humiliation of a dictated peace. Julius for a time wavered between these two opinions, 'hatred and obstinacy contending in his mind with danger and fear'. He thought of flight, and gave orders that a galley should be kept ready at Ostia. He thought of peace, and intimated to the Florentine Government that their mediation would be acceptable, though assuring the ambassadors of his allies that, if he were to enter into negotiations, it would be merely a ruse to gain time. He was still hesitating when Giulio de' Medici arrived in Rome, ostensibly to report the capture of the Legate, but really to acquaint Julius with the state of affairs in the French camp. He told the Pope of the demoralizing effect of the heavy French losses, of the consequent likelihood of continued French inactivity, of the ineffective authority of La Palice, upon whom the command had devolved, of the quarrel between the new general and his ecclesiastical colleague, Cardinal San Severino, of the dubious attitude of Alfonso d'Este, who had retired to Ferrara upon the pretext of awaiting Louis XII's commands, and of the growing French anxiety about the Swiss, whose hostile intentions could no longer be doubted. The report was encouraging, and seemed to be confirmed by the attitude of Louis XII, who despite his military success welcomed the Florentine *démarche*, and sent off an ambassador with plenary powers to negotiate a settlement with the Pope. Julius' spirits rose apace, and when the French proposals were laid before him in Consistory, he refused to accept them. To one who spoke with him of the situation he declared that he was ready to wager 100,000 ducats and his Triple Crown on ultimate success in ridding Italy of the French. To another he said that there was no cause for alarm; intercepted letters had revealed to him the true condition of the French army; and so far was he from thinking of peace that he hoped, God willing, to go soon to Paris and place the French crown on the King of England's head.[1]

1 'Ma anchora spero in Dio in breve andar a Parise a incoronar il Re d'Angliterra del reame de Franza': Mantuan envoy's dispatch, *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, p. 85; Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 435–42; A. von Reumont, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom*, vol. iii, part ii, pp. 35–7.

The reports which Julius had received about the conditions prevailing in the French camp were in the main correct, and the inactivity of La Palice, when the road to Rome lay open before him, showed how grave was the loss which the French army had sustained, when its resolute and dynamic young chief had fallen beneath the Spanish pikes. Gaston de Foix would have found a way to overcome the difficulties which confronted the army after its costly triumph, but in his successor the ability and the authority necessary for that purpose were lacking. La Palice was not the man to press on in the confident hope that French sabres could be made to rattle in the Vatican before Swiss pikes should clank in the Alpine passes. In his eyes difficulties and dangers loomed larger than opportunities and prospects. He was short of cavalry horses, for the chargers of the *gendarmerie* had suffered severely in the battle. He was short of men, for over and above the heavy losses incurred in action he had been crippled further by the economies of Bohier, the Général des Finances, whose mission in Italy was to keep a tight hand on military extravagance, and who thought that victory justified sweeping reductions in the *personnel* of the army. Though a brave soldier, the new leader did not possess the confidence of the troops, nor enjoy the respect which officers of noble birth had rendered to the nephew of their sovereign. Nor was he tactful. He fell out with Cardinal San Severino, the Legate of the Pisa Council. He was left in the lurch by the Duke of Ferrara, and for this had only himself to thank, seeing that he openly attributed the French casualties in large measure to the Ferrarese guns; the charge was possibly true, for others said that Alfonso had been told during the battle that his guns were firing on the French, and had answered: 'Let them fire all the same, for they are all enemies'; but there are times when the truth is inopportune, and La Palice should have known that this was one of them.[1]

For a brief period all seemed to be well. The army of the League had vanished, and Romagna lay at the mercy of the conquerors. Ravenna hastened to capitulate, and the example was followed in Imola, Forlì, Cesena, Rimini, Cervia,

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, col. 163; Cipolla, *Storia delle Signorie italiane dal 1313 al 1530*, vol. ii, p. 826.

and Faenza. The surrender of Ravenna was marked by another of those terrible scenes which seemed to be an inevitable accompaniment of French successes. The town offered to capitulate on the evening of Sunday, the day of the battle, the conditions being that victuals should be supplied to the camp, and that there should be no military occupation of the city. Exactly what happened then it is difficult to say, but the weight of evidence leans to the view that the city became an innocent victim of Gascon lawlessness and violence. Such, at least, is the account of the matter given in the deposition of a certain Brother Constantino, a monk who was then in Ravenna, where he had preached in the Cathedral, and who left the place a week afterwards. Early on Easter Monday, he said, La Palice, the Duke of Ferrara, and Cardinal San Severino made their entry into the town. 'Taking the place unawares, the Gascons also went in, and behaved so violently as to make it seem that all the devils of hell had been let loose, for never were such fury and cruelty seen or heard of. An unending massacre began. Breaking open houses, they slew more than 2,000 persons; women as well as men, priests and monks as well as laymen, were killed or made captive; I myself escaped as by a miracle. The whole place was sacked, the churches not being spared, and chalices, patens, and relics being seized by the plunderers. It would be impossible to exaggerate the things that were done.'[1] This version is supported by the evidence of a young Spaniard, who reported that Ravenna had surrendered upon terms on the Sunday evening, and that on the Monday 'the French had entered, shouting: "Sack! Sack!". The people, who had put their women and children in the churches and convents, and then, thinking the danger over, had got them out again, and were themselves unarmed, were slain or made prisoners by the Gascons, and even in the churches there were men killed.'[2] Elsewhere in Sanuto's *Diaries*, however, we find an account which, if accurate, would go far towards exculpating the French. According to this story the course of events was as follows. During Sunday night some of the principal citizens of Ravenna, without the knowledge of the garrison, arranged with the French to surrender the city, and when on Monday the French advanced, the traitors

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 155–6. [2] *Ibid.*, col. 110.

were at the breaches and the gates, where they handed out food and drink. Seeing this, the garrison not unnaturally suspected treachery, and hastily withdrew to the Rocca or the castle. The common people, not knowing that the city had been surrendered, came out against the French in great style, and repulsed them; but the French returned to the attack, drove the people back, and then set to work to sack the city.[1] If this story were true, the victorious French would have supposed that they had been treacherously attacked in the act of accepting the surrender of a city which had capitulated; but in that event Ravenna would have fared much worse than it did, for it would have learned, as Brescia had learned, what a French army meant by retributive punishment.

The garrison of Ravenna were not comprised in the surrender, and Vitelli, who commanded the Rocca, was to give a fine example of fortitude in the face of reverses. News of the battle was sent to the garrison by Fabrizio Colonna, who on the evening of the fatal day sent word to his nephew that the army of the League was beaten and himself taken prisoner, at the same time advising him to accept any terms which would enable him to leave Ravenna in safety. Then followed negotiations with Marc'Antonio Colonna in the citadel and with Vitelli in the Rocca. Marc'Antonio agreed to surrender on the terms that he and his men should be escorted to Roman territory, and should undertake not to serve against the Pope's enemies for five months; and on Friday the 16th he came out with a safe-conduct at the head of his men. The French then expected Ravenna to fall wholly into their power, but they had yet to reckon with the spirited commander of the Rocca. When first asked by Cardinal San Severino to surrender the Rocca, Vitelli had replied that he could not in honour give up his fortress until the citadel had capitulated. After Marc'Antonio's surrender the Cardinal reiterated his demand. Vitelli then answered that he could scarcely believe that the citadel had really surrendered, but supposing that it had done so, the Cardinal had better go and attend to the rest of Romagna, for when every other fortress had opened its gates, he would find it easier to reconcile with the demands of honour the

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, col. 153.

line of conduct which he was asked to pursue. At present he could not think of surrendering his place, for he meant to be faithful to the Pope; let them therefore do their worst; they might possibly reduce the Rocca in something under ten years. When the main French army marched from Ravenna on Thursday, they left Federigo da Bozzoli behind with 1,000 foot and some small guns to besiege the defiant Vitelli, promising to send substantial reinforcements together with a few big cannon to batter the Rocca. Vitelli smuggled out a messenger to report to the Signory and the Pope that he was well supplied with munitions and stores, that he meant to hold out gamely, if his men would support him, and that he advised a resolute prosecution of the war, seeing that the French had suffered heavily, and it should be easy to get the upper hand of them once more. In the French camp, added the messenger, things did not appear to be going very well: the leaders were awaiting orders from the King; they had heard that France was invaded by English and Spanish forces; and they were anxious about the Swiss.[1]

The new trouble with the Cantons had been fomented by the implacable Cardinal of Sion. In January 1512 Schiner had been invested by Julius with Legatine authority, and in March, when on his way to Germany, he had met in Venice a Swiss embassy, which had come on business connected with an enrolment of 6,000 mercenaries by the Signory, the Pope, and the King of Spain. The Swiss were in ill humour, complaining of unpunctual pay and other grievances. Schiner was tactful and conciliatory, inviting the ambassadors to luncheon, and then showing them a golden sword and cap of honour, which the Pope had sent as presents to the Confederacy; and in the end he won them over to the idea of a fresh attack on Lombardy, in which Venice was to cooperate. Then came the disaster at Ravenna, and at once the Pope wrote with his own hand to tell the Cardinal that his one hope was in the Swiss, and to beg that they should come to Lombardy and save the Church. Schiner of his own motion had already written to the Diet in the same sense, promising faithfully that, if they would help, the Pope's obligations should be met punctually; and at the same

[1] *Ibid.*, cols. 129–30.

time he had also given orders that the French should be denounced from Swiss pulpits, with promises of plenary indulgence to all who should take part against the enemies of the Church. Stimulated by this agitation, and allured by the prospect of pecuniary aid in pursuing their ambitions, the Diet on 9th May resolved to co-operate in an attack on Milan, and also offered to mediate in the dispute between the Emperor and Venice.[1]

Drawn on by the hope of an advantageous peace with Venice, Maximilian was moving farther and farther away from France: he concluded an armistice for ten months with the Signory, and in April gave permission to the Swiss to pass through his territories on their march into Italy. The Confederate forces assembled at Coire in May, and reached a total of 20,000 men, for the Grisons had denounced their treaty with France, and from all over Switzerland volunteers hastened to Coire to join themselves to the 6,000 mercenaries who had been enrolled by the League. Marching from Coire in the middle of May, the force was at Trent on the 20th, on the 26th was received by Schiner in Verona, which the French had evacuated overnight, and thence was led by the Cardinal to join hands with the Venetians at Villafranca. The enthusiasm which had brought his compatriots in such large numbers to the field was a source of embarrassment to Schiner, who had with him barely enough cash to give them a ducat a head, and knew them well enough to appreciate the consequences of disappointing them in their financial expectations.

The coming of this formidable force completely transformed the military situation in Italy: whereas in April the road to Rome had lain open before the victorious French, in June they were confronted by an invader whose progress they could scarcely expect to arrest, and at the news of whose arrival three other armies began to converge upon their insecure possessions. A large force had been collected by the Venetians at Vicenza, and was ordered forward to the Adige. A vigorous recruiting campaign by the Pope had mustered 20,000 men beneath the standards of the Duke of Urbino, who was advancing on Romagna. The Spanish

[1] A. Büchi, *Kardinal Matthäus Schiner als Staatsmann und Kirchenfürst*, vol. i, pp. 279–86.

Viceroy, too, was again taking the field, and although since his inglorious behaviour on the banks of the Ronco he was contemptuously referred to by Julius as 'Madonna di Cardona', yet La Palice had good reason to know that no commander of Spanish infantry could ever be reckoned a negligible factor in war. Against these numerous enemies La Palice was required to hold a country which was hostile with forces which were inadequate, and would be less adequate than ever when he had provided the necessary garrisons for such places as Milan, Parma, Bergamo, and Brescia. He could not expect reinforcements from home, for there every man was wanted to repel the expected attacks of English and Spanish armies. Looking for his most dangerous enemy to advance by the Val Camonica, he had made his dispositions to defend Milan on the north, and when by the Emperor's complaisance the Swiss were enabled to approach from the east, he was taken by surprise, and had no time to fortify his frontier on that side. With troops inferior alike in number and quality he could not venture to meet the enemy in the field, and his one hope must be that his strong places might delay the invaders long enough to involve them in victualling difficulties.

Due westwards of Villafranca, where Schiner had joined hands with the Venetian commander, Baglione, lies the town of Valeggio, and here on 31st May La Palice took up his position, covering the road to Milan; but it was not in this small and weak place that he meant to make his stand, and when on 2nd June the enemy advanced, he fell back quickly over the Mincio and the Oglio, and by the 4th was in Cremona. Here a shattering blow was dealt him when his German infantry left him on an order of recall from Maximilian. Bereft of the backbone of his army, he was constrained to retire once again. His disordered retreat became not much better than a flight, the enemy pressing hard on his heels, and occupying his towns almost in the moment of his evacuating them. Giving up the idea of holding the line of the Adda, he headed for the capital, but news reached him that Milan was on the brink of revolution, and on 12th June he made for Pavia. Here, if anywhere, in a great city defended by river, castle, walls, and moat, was the place to turn at bay, but La Palice was haunted by the fear

of having his retreat cut off, and when the enemy began to throw a bridge over the Ticino, he decided to hurry on whilst yet he might. Three thousand of his men were posted on the right bank of the Ticino with orders to resist an enemy crossing, and the evacuation of Pavia was then begun. To leave the place, it was necessary to cross a small stream called the Gravellone, a tributary of the Ticino, which was traversed by a wooden bridge. As soon as the French evacuation began, the enemy were apprised of it by messages from the inhabitants. A part of their force at once crossed the Ticino, and engaged the three thousand men who had been detailed to oppose their passage. Other troops escaladed the walls of the city, and harried the retreating French through the streets. Issuing from the gates hotly pursued, the rear-guard heard the sound of fighting in front, and knew by it that the enemy must be across the river. They lost their heads, and made a dash for the Gravellone bridge. As the struggling mass was surging over it, the flimsy structure broke, hurling its load to destruction in the waters beneath, and leaving all who had not reached it to be cut down by their pursuers. It was the last act in the swift-moving tragedy of the French defence of Milan. By the end of June the shattered fragments of La Palice's army were scrambling across the Alps for home.[1]

Deserted by its defenders, the edifice of French dominion in Italy, but lately so imposing, fell to pieces like a house of cards. Milan was occupied by the Swiss in the name of Massimiliano Sforza, Ludovic's son and heir, after a riot in which the mob murdered all the Frenchmen they could find and sacked all the houses belonging to Frenchmen in the city. Parma and Piacenza voluntarily gave themselves to the Pope. Genoa rebelled, and opened its gates to Campo Fregoso, who was serving as a *condottiere* in the pay of Venice. As soon as the Pope's army appeared in Romagna, the cities of that province with one accord offered their submission to his officers. The Bentivogli fled from Bologna, of which

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 444–9; A. Büchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 287–93; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Eng. trans., pp. 413–20; Ch. Kohler, 'Les Suisses dans les guerres d'Italie de 1506 à 1512', *Mémoires et documents publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève*, Series II, vol. iv, pp. 324–95.

the Duke of Urbino took possession in the name of the Church. By August the King of France had nothing left in Italy but a few fortresses, which he could not relieve, and was therefore bound to lose. Within three months of winning a victory which seemed to be overwhelming and ought to have been decisive, his troops 'had vanished like mist before the rising sun'.[1]

If an Italian letter-writer is to be believed when he purports to sum up the state of French feeling about these events, France bore her defeat with equanimity. According to Luigi da Porto, the French had received the news of Ravenna with much more of grief for their losses than of joy for their victory, 'and there arose a great murmuring against the King, who from mere lust of conquest and of aggrandizing his already great kingdom has cruelly sent the nobility of France to their deaths in Italy. The whole of France rejoices at the prospect of the Swiss going into Lombardy, since that will close the frontier, and lead to the King being deprived of Lombardy and of all his Italian possessions beyond hope of recovery. They think it honourable, profitable, and pleasant to own those possessions in time of peace; but when they consider how many French lives have been sacrificed on Italian soil within the space of a few years, they come to regard Lombardy as a place of torment and a charnel-house.'[2] Confirmation of this statement is found in the report of a spy, transcribed by Sanuto. 'It is you Italians who keep the King intent on Italy,' a French lord was said to have complained to Cardinal San Severino. 'Do you not perceive that the whole country is crying out about the extra taxation which the Italian wars necessitate? Italy is making the King unpopular with the whole country, and the whole nobility of France is being lost there. No one wants to cross the Alps again, unless we are sure of being in alliance with the Pope or with the Swiss or with the Venetians.'[3]

As La Palice fled over the Alps, his conquerors met to divide the spoils, and in August the first peace conference

[1] Francesco Vettori, 'Sommario della storia d'Italia', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. vi, p. 287.

[2] L. da Porto, *Lettere Storiche*, p. 315.

[3] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, col. 46.

of modern times was opened at Mantua. Too often in the history of such assemblies diplomacy has been set the task of satisfying irreconcilable claims, and has offered a solution pregnant with future evil. Such was the case at Mantua. There was but one matter in which all the participating powers were agreed, namely, their determination that Florence should be punished for her attachment to France by an enforced Medicean restoration; and even here there was friction, when Ferdinand showed evidence of a desire to turn Tuscany into a Spanish protectorate. But it was in the partition of Louis XII's possessions that the great difficulties were encountered. Ferdinand and Maximilian wanted the Milanese for their grandson, Charles of Austria, and were furious that the Pope, who had taken Modena from Alfonso d'Este, should also have attempted to filch Parma and Piacenza from the Lombard Duchy. To the proposal that the Ducal coronet of Milan should be included in the list of crowns to which Charles was heir, Julius could not be induced to assent, for it was not to substitute one foreigner for another that he had made so many sacrifices and run so many risks. His objection was shared by the Swiss, who claimed Milan for Ludovic's heir, knowing full well that Massimiliano could exist only by their favour and must do their bidding. They required that the Cantons should be included when the Milanese took an oath of allegiance to the League powers. Ignoring the claims of Venice to recover the territories of which the treaty of Cambray had deprived her, they demanded that Cremona and the Ghiara d'Adda should be retained in the Milanese, whilst themselves occupying Domodossola, Lugano, and Locarno, permitting the Grisons to seize the Valtelline, Bormio, and Chiavenna, and looking on whilst neighbouring Cantons annexed the county of Neuchâtel, which had passed into French hands on the marriage of its heiress to the Duke of Longueville in 1504.

Here was a situation pregnant with possibilities for an astute diplomacy, and it is not difficult to surmise how Louis XI would have profited by it to play upon jealousies and foment dissensions till he had set his enemies by the ears. But that crafty old spinner of diplomatic webs no longer controlled the destinies of his country, and no

methods were less akin to his than those which Louis XII followed. The opportunity was allowed to slip by, and Julius was permitted to re-weld his dissolving League with promises of further plunder. It was of prime importance to him to win Maximilian, partly as a counterpoise to the excessive power of the Swiss, and partly to secure Imperial adhesion to the Lateran Council. In this object he succeeded when the Bishop of Gurk visited Rome, and arranged with him that Venice should be sacrificed to Maximilian's ambition. On 19th November 1512 a new treaty was signed in Rome between Julius, acting for himself, Ferdinand, and Henry VIII, and Maximilian for himself and the Duke of Milan. It was stipulated that all the allies should make war upon the French, the schismatic enemies of the Holy Father, who persisted in their evil ways. The Pope and the Duke of Milan were to invade France from the south, and conquer Dauphiné and Provence; the Emperor was to conquer Burgundy and Picardy; Ferdinand and Henry were to conquer Normandy, Guyenne, and Languedoc; at least 5,000 Swiss mercenaries were to be engaged to aid in the holy task; and the Pope was to further it by excommunicating Louis and all his subjects.[1] It was a strange sequel to the victory of Ravenna. Remarkable as is that battle in many respects, it is most singular, perhaps, in this, that it should have been the prelude to the loss of Italy and the projected partition of France.

Note. My account of the battle of Ravenna is based upon the following authorities:

(1) Reports of eyewitnesses and other contemporary descriptions: a letter of Francesco Pandolfini, the Florentine ambassador, in Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 581–6; Fabrizio Colonna's account, in Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 176–80; report of Giovanni da Fino, a secretary of the Duke of Ferrara, attached to Cardinal San Severino, in O. Tommasini, *La vita e gli scritti di Niccolò Machiavelli*, vol. i, pp. 706–8; a letter of Jacopo Guicciardini, in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. xv, pp. 307–13, and in Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, pp. 35–43; a Spanish soldier's account, in Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 110–11; Niccolò da Castello's account, *ibid.*, cols. 128–32; the 'Loyal Serviteur's' account, ed. J. Roman, pp. 298–331 and 432–5;

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. 79–82.

a letter from Ferry Carondelet to Margaret of Austria, in *Lettres de Louis XII*, vol. iii, pp. 227–32; Fleuranges' account, in the *Histoire des choses mémorables advenues du reigne de Louis XII et François I*, ed. Michaud et Poujoulat, *Nouvelle collection des mémoires*, vol. v, pp. 27–9; Luigi da Porto's description in his *Lettere Storiche*, pp. 296–314; 'Relatio' of Zwingli in his *Opera*, ed. M. Schuler and J. Schulthess, vol. iv, pp. 167–72; various letters, &c., in Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 13, 15, 17–19, 23, 36, 42, 54–5, 73, 84, 86, 88, 126–8, 151–7; Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. ii, pp. 416–34; Buonaccorsi, *Diario*, pp. 170–1; and cf. 'Sobra la batalla de Ravena' and 'Relacion de los sucesos de las armas de España en Italia en los años de 1511 y 1512 con la jornada de Ravena', in *Coleccion de documentos ineditos para la historia de España*, vol. xxvi, pp. 5–7, and vol. lxxix, pp. 274 *et seq.*

(2) General accounts by modern historians: Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, vol. v, part i, pp. 102–4; Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 267–9; Villari, *The Life and Times of Niccolò Machiavelli*, Eng. trans., vol. ii, pp. 1–6; Hardÿ de Périni, *Batailles françaises*, vol. i, pp. 206–17; Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, vol. iv, pp. 145–7.

(3) Modern critical studies: Erich Siedersleben, *Die Schlacht bei Ravenna (11 April 1512)*; S. Ghigi, *Battaglia e saccheggio di Ravenna avenuti l'anno 1512*; F. L. Taylor, *The Art of War in Italy, 1494–1529*, pp. 119–22, 180–204.

XXVI

NAVARRE

As the storm in Italy subsided, the centre of the European disturbance shifted to the Pyrenees, in which region Ferdinand and Henry VIII had pledged themselves to a joint invasion of Louis XII's dominions. The object of the English monarch was to recover the possessions which his predecessors had once owned in Guyenne, and his crafty partner had let it be supposed that he was prepared to co-operate in that design. In fact, however, the end which the Spanish monarch pursued was quite different, and took no account of English ambitions. He had led Henry on, because it suited him that the English should create a diversion, divide the forces of the French, and help to dissipate their strength; and in case of necessity he was prepared to give his allies such assistance as might make their intervention effective; but in his real programme the rôle assigned to his comrade in arms was merely that of a stalking-horse, covering his approach to his own prey; and that prey was Navarre.

France and Spain had long contended for supremacy in this small but ancient kingdom, which stood athwart the Pyrenees, a buffer State between its two powerful neighbours. In a balance of power between those neighbours Navarre found the best security for the maintenance of her independence, for her condition was not such that she could hope to defend her own integrity. Torn by a long and bitter internal strife, the little kingdom was materially enfeebled and morally bankrupt: national sentiment had been destroyed by the forces of anarchy, and loyalty had dwindled amid frequent changes of dynasty, which had made it impossible for the Crown to gain any firm hold upon the affections of the people. Nor had the prospects of the little country been made more bright by the recent accession of the House of Foix-d'Albret. From the point of view of Navarre, the large possessions of that House in France served merely to distract and imperil the sovereign without bringing any compensating increase in his power; and the chief result of the occupation of the throne of Navarre by a French House was to foster the hopes of France, thereby intensifying the

apprehensions of Spain, and so hastening a culmination which was, perhaps, in any event inevitable.[1]

The throne of Navarre had come into the hands of the d'Albrets upon the marriage in June 1484 of Catherine of Foix, its heiress, with Jean, son of Alain d'Albret. Catherine's title was disputed by her uncle, the Vicomte de Narbonne, the head of the House of Foix, who maintained that a great fief such as Navarre could not be subject to a right of female succession; and it was largely to secure the support of France in the impending struggle for the throne that the hand of the French suitor was accepted for Catherine by her relatives. The result was satisfactory in so far as Anne de Beaujeu was led to intervene, and succeeded in patching up a settlement of the succession quarrel. It was unsatisfactory in so far as it gave to Alain d'Albret an opportunity of influencing the policy of Navarre in favour of the feudal coalition against the French Regent, whose answer was to allow the Vicomte de Narbonne again to advance his claims. Fear of the Foix pretensions then had the effect of throwing the rulers of Navarre into the arms of Spain, and no serious attempt was made by France to counteract Spanish influence after Charles VIII had assumed the reins of power, for that monarch was far too intent on his Neapolitan expedition to care what might happen on the Pyrenees. In 1494 Catherine and her consort were crowned under Spanish protection, and Spanish predominance was assured by a series of treaties, of which the treaty of Medina del Campo, entered into in April 1494, was the most important.[2]

In the early days of his reign Louis XII, like his predecessor, Charles VIII, was engrossed in Italian adventure, and did not pay much heed to French interests in Navarre. Peace on the Pyrenees was essential to his plans, and to secure it he was ready to throw over his brother-in-law, the pretender, Jean de Narbonne, and seek a friendship with his old enemy, Alain d'Albret. Alain for his part was disposed to meet him half-way, for he perceived that the support of France would be equally valuable against the pretensions of the Narbonne claimant and the encroachments of Spain. It

[1] Boissonnade, *Histoire de la réunion de la Navarre à la Castille*, pp. 3–8, 17, 20. It is to this book that I am in the main indebted for the summary which follows.

[2] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–65, 74.

was because Alain was pursuing this policy that the unhappy Charlotte d'Albret was sacrificed in the iniquitous compact which handed her over as the bride of Cesare Borgia in 1499. In return for that service Louis XII interested himself in seeking a solution of the succession question, and when he arranged a marriage between Anne, the daughter of the King and Queen of Navarre, and Gaston de Foix, the son of the pretender, the dispute seemed to have been brought to an end by an alliance which effected a fusion of the rival claims to the throne. The marriage held out treacherous hopes of prosperity and peace. 'The short calm which prevailed from 1498 to 1503', says the historian of Navarre, 'was the most brilliant period in the history of its sovereigns. They enjoyed unbroken peace in their own States. The quarrel about the Foix succession was over. They were allied with the Pope and the King of France. Their kingdom was pacified. By the treaties of Seville they looked to recover their independence by calming the uneasiness of the Spanish sovereigns and obtaining the withdrawal of the Castilian garrisons. The future seemed to be brighter than the past. They did not reflect that the calm had no guarantees but a very fragile alliance with Louis XII and Alexander VI, and that it must end whenever the inevitable rivalry between France and Spain should begin once more. The tranquillity of their States was at the mercy of a caprice on the part of the French or the Spanish monarch. The one could revive the pretensions of the House of Narbonne; the other could let loose upon Navarre the usual author of its troubles, Louis de Beaumont. To maintain neutrality and preserve their independence against their two powerful neighbours, the sovereigns of Navarre should have possessed demesnes more closely knit by community of interest, sentiment, and manners, subjects animated by a firmer spirit of loyalty, a stronger authority, greater financial and military resources, and much more political ability than they had ever possessed.' As things were, conquest or dismemberment by their greater neighbours had so far been avoided only because those neighbours had been distracted by their own domestic difficulties or had been absorbed in the affairs of Italy.[1]

Deluded for a time by specious hopes, the sovereigns of

[1] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–9, 160.

Navarre were unpleasantly reminded of the delicacy of their position when France and Spain fell out over the division of Naples in 1503, and began a war which spread to the Pyrenean region. Willing enough to maintain neutrality, but unable to enforce respect for it, Navarre found herself obliged to choose between the contending parties, and espoused the Spanish cause by her refusal to open her passes to the French. Thereafter the country was involved in open enmity with Louis XII, and at the same time was enmeshed in an association with Ferdinand which was scarcely less dangerous to its interests. After long hesitation its sovereigns sought an escape from their perils by an approach to Austria, whose interests seemed to be identical with their own. The Archduke Philip complained of Ferdinand's intrusion in Castile much as the sovereigns of Navarre complained of his intrusion in their country. He complained of Louis XII's support of the Duke of Guelders as they complained of his support of Gaston de Foix, who on the death of his father had succeeded to the Narbonne claims. His dispute with Ferdinand about the government of Castile disposed the Archduke to welcome the prospect of an alliance with the rulers of Navarre, and in August 1506 he negotiated the treaty of Tudela del Duero as an answer to the then recent *rapprochement* between Louis and Ferdinand, which had issued in Ferdinand's marriage with Germaine de Foix. That marriage induced in Louis the hope that he could win over Ferdinand to join him in enforcing the claims of Gaston, who was Germaine's brother, and such hopes Ferdinand deftly encouraged. It was true that he did not commit himself to definite promises, but it was known that he was angry about the Austro-Navarrese alliance, and it was certain that, if his new Queen were to acquire any influence over him, that influence would be used in favour of Gaston de Foix. Such was the position when Maximilian demanded that the sovereigns of Navarre should be included in the treaty of Cambray, and it was because of his new-born hope that the long-coveted throne might at last be won for his nephew that Louis resisted the demand with a vigour which came near to bringing about a complete rupture of those important negotiations.[1]

[1] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 185, 201–12, 232–44.

When the powers which had joined Louis XII for the purpose of plundering Venice re-grouped themselves in the Holy League, the position of the rulers of Navarre once more became critical. Desiring, as usual, to maintain their neutrality, they declined to join the League against Louis or to side with Louis against the League; but as soon as Ferdinand and Henry VIII with their plan for an invasion of Guyenne threatened to bring the Pyrenees into the theatre of war, it became impossible that either side should tolerate any uncertainty about the attitude of Navarre, upon whose control over the Pyrenean passes the success or failure of an attack upon Guyenne depended. In these circumstances it became inevitable that the neutrality of Navarre should be violated either by Ferdinand or by Louis XII, unless it could be maintained by an adequate display of force. Dread of Louis as the supporter of the Foix pretender inclining their sympathies to the side of the League powers, the sovereigns of Navarre made such a display against the French in Béarn, but took no defensive measures against Spain, of whom they were less afraid, and with whom they were not indisposed to come to an arrangement. Thus matters stood when an event in Italy altered the whole situation in Navarre. That event was the death of Gaston de Foix, which vested the Foix claims in Ferdinand's Queen, and therefore profoundly affected the relations between France and Navarre. Louis XII and the d'Albrets came together, and on 17th July 1512 signed a treaty in which each side promised to the other mutual aid against all enemies, with a further promise by Navarre to declare war on England, which had declared war on France. The existence of such a treaty made it plain that, if Ferdinand were still to obtain control of Navarre, he must secure it by force. That astute sovereign laid his plans accordingly, holding out as a painful necessity a solution which had long been his secret goal. He told the English that to attack Guyenne he must pass through Navarre, and that, a free passage being denied him, he must begin with an attack on that kingdom. Meanwhile he pressed on with his preparations, and when he was ready, alleged an offensive alliance between France and Navarre as a justification for the unprovoked attack which he was meditating. That it enabled 'the spoiler to pose as a victim' was not the

only advantage of Ferdinand's specious fiction. If the Navarrese sovereigns had joined hands with France, they could be denounced as the abettors of schismatics, who had incurred the penalties of excommunication, and Ferdinand might then also pose as the lawful occupier of territory forfeited by Papal decree.[1]

Meanwhile in England Ferdinand's ally and dupe was preparing for his Guyenne expedition. War with France had been sanctioned by the Parliament which met in January 1512, and the country was full of martial din and bustle. In April Sir Edward Howard was appointed to the command of the English fleet, and an indenture was entered into which provided that he should have at his disposal a squadron of eighteen sail: these were to be the *Regent*, of a thousand tons; the *Mary Rose*, of five hundred tons; three ships of four hundred tons; one of three hundred tons; one of two hundred and forty tons; one of two hundred tons; and ten smaller vessels.[2] In the naval sphere England's business was to mind the seas on her side of Brest, whilst the Spanish fleets policed them beyond, and Howard was instructed to cruise in the Channel between Brest and London. He put to sea as ordered, cruised for a fortnight, chasing French fishing-boats and holding up merchantmen, and early in May returned to Portsmouth to convoy the expeditionary force to Spain. The Venetian Consul sent home an inspiriting account of English activities. 'The troops, fifteen thousand in number, are all embarked', he wrote, 'and are at the Isle of Wight, awaiting favourable weather, which may God send soon! They are very fine fellows and in all respects admirably equipped, and they will attack the French in Gascony, where the King of Spain is awaiting them with a considerable force. In a few days another six thousand will embark, who are now hurriedly making ready. Likewise another twenty thousand men will cross to Calais under the King's Steward, who is making the utmost speed to get ready, whilst His Majesty is making ready with another twenty thousand men under Talbot, all of whom are already selected and enrolled, so that, if it were necessary, they could

[1] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 271–94; Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, p. 147.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, p. 540.

start to-morrow. Nothing is thought of here but warlike preparations, and so many guns and munitions have been made that a heap of money is being spent; every day letters about munitions come from Flanders and Upper Germany; and you may regard it as certain that with the help of God these English will beat the French dogs to their knees, as they have often done in days gone by. In the Channel they have thirty large men-of-war, and every French fishing-boat that ventures out is captured. It is said that the French have armed a few ships, but they dare not put to sea. Vessels freighted with Genoese and Florentine property are expected from the Mediterranean, and these, if intercepted, will be plundered like the others. Foreigners here of those nationalities are much alarmed, but they hold their tongues, for they dare not speak ill of the League, and are obliged, if they talk at all, to abuse the French. Such abuse is, no doubt, contrary to their real sentiments, but they dare not say anything else for fear of getting their heads broken open.'[1]

At the beginning of June the weather was fair for the departure of the force which was to go to Spain under the Marquis of Dorset, and on 3rd June Howard set out from Portsmouth to convoy the troops to the end of the Channel, where Ferdinand's sailors would assume responsibility. Freed from the care of the convoy, Howard decided to beat up the enemy's quarters before returning to port, and on 6th June the English fleet put in at Bertheaume Bay on the Breton coast. Here Howard went ashore, and after driving off the local levies which were guarding the coast, he marched about the country-side, burning towns and villages, and driving the inhabitants to take refuge beneath the fortifications of Brest. Amongst the places which suffered in his raid was the fishing port of Le Conquet, destined on a future occasion to suffer yet more severely at English hands, and among the country houses given to the flames was the home of Hervé de Porzmoguer, a Breton gentleman serving in the French fleet, with whose name Howard would become more familiar ere many weeks had passed. Sailing southwards again in two or three days' time, Howard entered Douarnenez Bay, and on the 8th landed on its northern

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 387–8 (*sic*, but apparently a misprint for 337–8, the pagination of the whole volume from this place being erroneous).

shore near the little town of Crozon. Here the English landing-party was confronted by enemy forces quite strong enough, if resolutely handled, to make their situation precarious; but fortunately for them the enemy captains procrastinated, with results fatal to their cause. Their plan was to retire as the English advanced, and then take them at a disadvantage as they regained their boats; but they omitted to explain their intentions to their men, and these, being unaccountably ordered to fall back, supposed that 'the captains had seen or known some great peril [near] at hand', and accordingly 'ran all away as fast as they might'. Howard re-embarked at leisure, and made sail for Portsmouth with twenty-six prizes following in his wake.[1]

A Royal Councillor gleefully recorded that the English 'remained four days in Brittany, won several battles, slew many enemies, captured many knights and other gentlemen, burnt the towns and villages for thirty miles round, and with their small force of 5,000 challenged 15,000 French and Bretons'.[2] In the belief of a well-informed spy there might have been cause for yet greater jubilation, if Howard had availed himself of his opportunities to the full, for at Honfleur as many as a hundred vessels were being equipped for war, and as they had no protection but such as was afforded by a puny little squadron of four men-of-war, they might all have been destroyed by the English fleet. That done, the English might have landed in Normandy, where an unwarlike population, rendered disaffected by depreciation in the currency and an increase in taxation, would have offered little opposition, so that a small force might safely have carried fire and sword through the country-side. The opportunity, if ever it existed outside the imagination of the zealous informer, was neglected, and in war neglected opportunities seldom recur. When Howard next put to sea in August, Louis' naval preparations had made good progress, and his Channel coasts were no longer defenceless. Special taxation had been imposed; the victualling of the fleet in Norman ports had been organized; more than twenty ships

[1] A. Spont, *Letters and Papers relating to the War with France, 1512–1513* (Navy Records Society), pp. xi–xix; La Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol. iii, pp. 90–3; Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, pp. 571–2.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, p. 583.

had been equipped for war in the dockyards of Normandy and Brittany; intercourse with England and the Iberian peninsula had been forbidden; and letters of marque had been distributed with a lavish hand to Norman and Breton ship-owners. A Royal decree of 2nd July entrusted the conduct of naval operations to René de Clermont, and Prégent de Bidoux, the admiral in the Mediterranean, was ordered to repair to Brittany with his galleys, so that the whole naval strength of France might be concentrated against the English.[1] Prégent, said Paolo Giovio, 'thought that his galleys might be of much service against the great ships of the enemy, which were propelled by sails, more especially when the sea was calm and there was no wind; for then, as he supposed, the great ships would lie becalmed, and might easily be surrounded by fast rowing galleys, and sunk by gun-fire'.[2] It is a curious commentary upon this passage that a year later these very tactics were employed by the English against Prégent himself, on which occasion that enterprising commander narrowly missed being hoist with his own petard.

At the end of July, when the fleet was to sail again, Henry VIII went to Portsmouth to give his officers 'a banquet before their setting forward', and a few days after this entertainment Howard once more put to sea. On this occasion his fleet was composed of twenty-five ships of war, including the *Regent* and her sister ship, the *Sovereign*, each of a thousand tons burden; and as it was accompanied by a like number of vessels laden with munitions, it had all the appearance of a formidable armada. Howard patrolled the Channel, looking out for enemy vessels, and, not finding any, made for the coast of Brittany, to seek an engagement with the French fleet. Sighting land late on the evening of 9th August, he sailed along the coast that night, and by the following morning found himself at no great distance from the entrance to the Rade de Brest. At eleven o'clock the look-out in his galley, which had been sent forward on scouting duty, reported that many ships were lying at anchor some six miles ahead, near the entrance to the Rade. Howard assumed, correctly, that these were the French ships of war, and the great fear in the English fleet then was lest the French should profit by their position to slip back into

[1] Spont, *op. cit.*, pp. xx–xxiii. [2] Paolo Giovio, *Istorie*, pp. 229–30.

harbour before they could be brought to action. To prevent such an escape, Howard and his captains crowded on all the sail they could carry, and, helped onward by a brisk westerly breeze, bore down upon the enemy's anchorage.

No hint had reached the French that Howard was again at sea, and their squadron was taken completely by surprise by the arrival of the English fleet. So far were their ships from being in warlike trim that the officers of one of the largest vessels, the *Cordelière*, were engaged at that very time in giving a party to the gentry of the neighbourhood, many of whom with their womenfolk had gone on board to celebrate the Feast of St. Lawrence. The *Cordelière*, of seven hundred tons, which belonged to Anne of Brittany, and was commanded by Hervé de Porzmoguer, one of her nobles, was the pride of the Breton fleet. Save for the *Louise*, the flag-ship of the French admiral, none of Louis XII's war ships was as big or as powerfully armed as the great Breton carrack. Nineteen other vessels lay at anchor beside these two ships, but all of them were of inconsiderable tonnage, and when the formidable-looking squadron of the enemy was seen bearing down upon them, René de Clermont, the admiral, gave orders to his captains to weigh anchor and retreat through the Goulet to Brest. Most of them did so, escaping as expeditiously as circumstances allowed, but the *Louise* and the *Cordelière* could not be handled as smartly as their smaller consorts, and before these big ships could get under way, the leading English vessels were upon them.

In the race to reach the French anchorage in time the *Mary Rose*, Howard's flag-ship, of five hundred tons, and the *Mary James*, of four hundred tons, commanded by Sir Anthony Ughtred, outsailed their consorts, and were a quarter of a league ahead of the main fleet when they came within range of the two belated French vessels. Howard directed his attention to the *Louise*, since she carried the flag of the rival admiral, and René de Clermont, whilst still struggling to raise his anchor, found himself under a hot fire from the *Mary Rose*: three hundred of his men fell beneath the storm of shot; his mainmast was carried away by a ball from a big gun; and, unwilling to submit to further punishment, he cut his cable and ran shoreward towards the reefs, where Howard might not venture to follow him. During

this time the other big French ship, the *Cordelière*, had been engaged by Ughtred's small vessel, the *Mary James*. Following the rule that a smaller ship should refrain from grappling a larger one, Ughtred stood away from Porzmoguer's carrack, circling round her, whilst his six big guns discharged repeated broadsides into her hull. The *Cordelière* suffered severely from this bombardment, the effects of which had become plainly visible by the time that her antagonist was joined by the other English ships, whose combined attack she had then in her shattered condition to resist; nor was there any to help her but a gallant little craft, known as the *Nef de Dieppe*, whose captain, disdaining to continue his flight when he saw that the *Cordelière* and the *Louise* had failed to make good their escape, had gone about to render such aid as lay in his power. The *Nef de Dieppe* was immediately surrounded by five English vessels, but the skill or the luck of her captain matched his courage; he contrived miraculously to keep his opponents off throughout a hot engagement of five hours' duration; and at last, late in the afternoon, he escaped, torn and battered, from their clutches.

A more dramatic fate had by then overtaken the great carrack, to whose aid he had so pluckily turned back. As the English fleet came into action, its two giants, the *Sovereign* and the *Regent*, shaped their courses so as to engage respectively the *Cordelière* and the *Nef de Dieppe*. Finding himself to windward of Porzmoguer's vessel, the captain of the *Sovereign*, Charles Brandon, the future Duke of Suffolk, bore down upon her with the evident intention of striking her bowsprit; but Porzmoguer put a broadside into him which made him sheer off with one of his masts broken. Perceiving what had happened, Sir Thomas Knyvet in the *Regent* decided to desist from his attack upon the *Nef de Dieppe*, in order that he might take the place of his damaged consort in the pursuit of bigger game. To do so, he had to go about, for he was now to leeward of Porzmoguer's ship. He put down his helm, and began to manœuvre for the wind. Whilst his ship was in stays, Porzmoguer bore down upon him, for the Frenchman had guessed his intention, and thought that, if there was to be a duel, he would do better to begin it with the wind in his favour. The *Cordelière* was heavily armed, as the *Mary James* had found to her cost in

the earlier engagement, in which a third of the English crew had been killed or wounded by the French fire. It was now the turn of the stately *Regent* to be the target of the deadly hail of cannon-balls and grape-shot. Knyvet, the captain, fell; his second in command, Sir John Carew, was wounded. Their men in the *Regent* replied vigorously, but, belching flame, the great carrack made on, as though Porzmoguer knew that his vessel's hours were numbered, and had resolved that she should sell her life dearly. Before the *Regent* could avoid him, he was alongside of her and had caught her with his grappling-irons. 'The fight was cruel betwixt those two ships, the archers on the English side, and the crossbows on the French part doing their uttermost to annoy each other: but finally the Englishmen entered the carrack, which being perceived by a gunner, he desperately set fire in the gunpowder, as some say; though there were that affirmed, how Sir Anthony Ughtred, following the *Regent* at the stern, bowged her in divers places, and set her powder on fire. But howsoever it chanced, the whole ship by reason of the fire was set on fire, and so both the carrack and the *Regent*, being grappled together so as they could not fall off, were both consumed by fire at that instant'.[1] One hundred and eighty men of the *Regent's* crew jumped overboard, and were picked up by boats from the other English ships; but Sir John Carew and six hundred soldiers and sailors perished in the conflagration or went down in the blazing wreck. Of the much larger crew of the *Cordelière*, overwhelmed more speedily by the explosion, the survivors numbered but six, and those were taken prisoners. They did not include her captain, who had jumped overboard in his armour and had perished with his men. For many years afterwards the name of Hervé de Porzmoguer was held in honour in the Royal Navy of France; and far beyond the limits of his own service and his own country the story of the last fight of the *Cordelière* will be accounted worthy to be had in remembrance among the many moving tales of chivalry and heroism which irradiate the stern but splendid annals of the sea.[2]

[1] Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 573.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xv, cols. 227–8; *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. ii, pp. 80–2; A. Spont, *Letters and Papers relating to the War with France*,

After the battle the English went ashore, burned some ships, took some prisoners, and set fire to some villages; then re-embarking, they cruised at their leisure along the Channel coast of France, capturing more vessels, which were also given to the flames; and by the end of the month they were back again in their home ports. Despite the loss of his great ship, the *Regent*, Henry VIII had reason to be satisfied with his sailors, and his satisfaction was doubtless increased by the fact that he had little cause to be satisfied with the soldiers whom he had sent to Guyenne. For things were not going well with the Marquis of Dorset's army. From the first the army suffered grievously from lack of organization, want of necessaries, the inexperience and indiscipline of the troops, the incapacity of the commanders, and the untrustworthiness of the ally of whom so much was expected, and by whom so little was done. The English landed in Spain on 7th June. They looked to their ally to provide them with quarters, victuals, and transport, and to join them in an immediate advance on Bayonne; but they looked in vain. No preparations had been made for their disembarkation, no arrangements for their accommodation. Having few tents of their own, they were obliged to lie in the open, sheltering under bushes from heavy rain and the burning Spanish sun. They had no carriages, and the transport expected from Ferdinand was not sent. Before ever they had got ashore, they had had occasion to bemoan 'the ungodly manners of the seamen, who robbed the King's victuals when the soldiers were sea-sick'.[1] They had not been long on land when they found that they had to do with landsmen every whit as graceless as the pilfering mariners. Scantily provided as they were, they had to buy nearly all their necessaries, and for every purchase an exorbitant price was charged in an 'ungracious country, where the people love a ducat better than

1512–1513, pp. xxiv–xxviii; C. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol. iii, pp. 93–103. For the story of the *Cordelière* and the *Regent* I have followed in the main M. de la Roncière's account. Sanuto (whose account is derived from English sources) and Holinshed say that the *Regent* closed with and grappled the French ship, the latter explaining the position of the *Regent* to leeward by saying that after the *Cordelière* had been grappled, she let go an anchor, causing both ships to swing round with the tide, and thus reversing their positions relative to the wind.

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, pp. 571–2.

all their kin'.[1] Food was not only dear; it was also bad and scarce. Worst of all, there was no beer, that essential adjunct of martial activity, without which no English army could be expected to keep in good fettle, and for lack of which other English troops were to come within an ace of throwing away their chances in the Scottish campaign of the following summer. Deprived of the national beverage, Dorset's men fell sullenly back upon the local wines, but those wines, being hot, suited English stomachs as ill as the climate suited English constitutions. The army had been in Spain for barely a month when Lord Howard confessed to Wolsey that many of the men were dying of sickness, and that he feared for the discipline of the troops, if the sickness should become more general.[2] After six weeks of foreign service the army's whole achievement was the capture and the burning of Saint-Jean-de-Luz, a frontier place of no great importance, which they had found undefended; and the achievement was not only inglorious in itself, but had also angered Ferdinand, who thought that the English would have done better to show humanity where they encountered no opposition.[3] Discomforts, at which a busy man shrugs his shoulders resignedly, assume formidable proportions in the eyes of those who have nothing to do but grumble; nor is anything more fatal than inaction to the morale of a force exposed to privation and hardship. Things went rapidly from bad to worse in Dorset's unemployed and ill-furnished ranks. 'The army is idle,' wrote a correspondent to Wolsey on 5th August; 'a large band has refused to serve longer under 8d. a day.[4] . . . Many declare that they will go home at Michaelmas, if they should die for it. All this comes from inaction. Martial exercises are not kept up. The army is unlearned, and hath not seen the feats of war. They never muster for payment. Many are slain; others have died; some have deserted. The army neglect their instructions, and the leaders will take no advice.'[5]

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, p. 590.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 590.

[3] Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, p. 80.

[4] 'Through a false report, contrived by some malicious person, which was, that the captains should be allowed eight pence for every common soldier; where the truth was, that they had allowed to them but only six pence': Holinshed, *Chronicle*, vol. iii, p. 569.

[5] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part i, pp. 618–19.

For the inefficiency of the control, if not for the inadequacy of the organization, Dorset must be held accountable; but for the inactivity of the force some of the blame belongs to Ferdinand, 'whose words and writings were so diligent and so fair, but his deeds so immeasurably slack'.[1] Dorset had come to Spain believing that he would be joined at Fontarabia by Ferdinand's contingent, and that the united forces would then co-operate in an attack upon Bayonne. Upon his arrival, however, he had been told by Ferdinand that the English plan of campaign was impracticable; Bayonne was strong, well supplied, and held by an ample garrison; a siege would be a long affair; before it could be undertaken, it was essential that the communications with Spain should be secured; and to secure them, it would first be necessary to carry out the conquest of Navarre. In this operation the English were accordingly invited to join. Dorset refused: he had been sent to recover the English possessions in Guyenne, and nothing had been said about winning Navarre for Ferdinand. Much disputation followed, and while the negotiations dragged on, the English army lay supine.[2]

From time to time, as the story progresses, we may watch events through the observant eyes of Guicciardini, the historian, who was then representing his native city at the Spanish Court, and kept the Florentine Government informed about Ferdinand's projects and prospects. In a dispatch composed at different times between 10th and 15th July he reported that the English, about 8,000 in number, were waiting at Fontarabia for the Spaniards, and that the Spanish troops were assembled on the frontier, but had not moved, because it was thought dangerous to enter France by Bayonne without having security as regards Navarre. The King of Navarre had declared that he meant to remain neutral, but a mere assurance was deemed inadequate, since the King was a Frenchman, with relatives and possessions in France. So Ferdinand had told him that, whilst welcoming his assurance of neutrality, he found it necessary to his safety to require permission to occupy certain fortresses. Were the King of Navarre to accept this demand, hostilities would

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xxvi.
[2] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. xlii–xliv.

begin in France; otherwise the war would begin in Navarre. The Spanish army consisted of 1,300 men-at-arms, 2,000 light horse, and 2,000 foot, but its numbers would increase daily, as the King had called all his nobles to the colours. Involved in Italy and apprehensive of an English attack on Calais, the King of France would be reduced to the defensive, and the Spaniards were building hopes on their excellent infantry and numerous artillery. On the other hand, Bayonne was well fortified, and its citizens were expected to put up a stout defence. Navarre, should the war begin there, was a mountainous and difficult country, and the allied forces would enter a very sterile region, in which they could subsist only on supplies drawn from distant bases. For this Ferdinand had, indeed, made ample provision, but should Louis XII be able to withstand the first attack, the allied armies might encounter many difficulties, and the surmounting of these would not be made the easier by the fact that the armies were drawn from two nations and lacked unity of command.[1]

On 17th July, the day of the signature of the Blois treaty between Louis XII and the King of Navarre, Ferdinand dismissed the Navarrese ambassador, and sent orders to his general, the Duke of Alva, which slipped the chains that had held his dogs of war in leash. His army now consisted of 17,000 men; and albeit the Marquis of Dorset persisted in his refusal to co-operate, yet the English by their mere presence on the frontier served to immobilize large French forces in Bayonne. The sovereigns of Navarre were unprepared to resist the advance of Alva's forces. They had not expected a Spanish invasion, for they had supposed that Ferdinand would rest content with the attitude of benevolent neutrality which they intended to maintain; and, not having expected an attack, they had done nothing to meet it. Their fortresses on the Spanish frontier had not merely been left in disrepair, but they were scarcely even so much as garrisoned. Such troops as were under arms were stationed in Béarn, where before the happy issue of the Blois negotiations they had been mustered to oppose the French; the suddenness of Ferdinand's stroke left no time to transfer the Béarn contingents or to raise new levies on the threatened frontier; had there been time, there would have been no

[1] Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, pp. 70–2.

money; and no help could be given by the French. The Duke of Alva's task was therefore easy. He left his quarters near Vittoria on 19th July, on the 21st crossed the frontier, and on the 22nd sat down before Pampeluna. Many exiles of the Beaumont faction accompanied the Spaniards, and their presence inspired in the mind of the King of Navarre a not unreasonable apprehension of treachery. Even if he should not be betrayed, he could not hope to resist, and on the 23rd he decided to flee. Next day his capital surrendered to the Duke of Alva: Navarre had been lost and won.[1]

The Catholic King hoped that a deluded world might admire the essential unselfishness of his conduct. He wished it to be believed that it was not with any thought of personal advantage that he had attacked Navarre. The sovereigns of that country, misguided or unprincipled, had abetted the schismatic King of France, and then had striven to hinder the sacred act of retribution to which Ferdinand had been impelled by his zeal for Holy Church. Ferdinand had occupied their country, not because such an occupation had long been his secret goal, but because the interests of religion required this painful sacrifice of family feeling. The fact remained that the piety of the Catholic King was strangely rich in worldly benefits. Zeal for the faith had compelled the conquest of Andalusia; horror of the Infidel had required the seizure of Naples upon the pretext of protecting it; and now the duty of defending the saintly Julius against wicked schismatics had added Navarre to the dominions of the Spanish Crown.

Again we will turn to the letters of the time, and allow Guicciardini to carry on the story. The Spaniards, he wrote on 22nd August, took the way of Pampeluna, which is the chief city of Navarre. The King was there, but retired over the hills. The city was not strong, and surrendered without resistance. The invaders then attacked the other places of the kingdom, many of which submitted in a few days, and only two or three of the chief fortresses held out. The Catholic King had come to the frontier, and it was believed that in a few days all would be in his power up to the Pyrenees. The King of Navarre had crossed the mountains

[1] Boissonnade, *Histoire de la réunion de la Navarre à la Castille*, pp. 321–7; Prescott, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, pp. 676–7.

to a part of his dominions called Béarn, where La Palice was said to have arrived with 1,200 lances and a large body of foot. The reason why the places on this side of the mountains had not been succoured was not that the French lacked the power, but that they distrusted the population, for the people are Spanish in customs and language, and were lately subjects of the Aragonese Crown.

'The English are still at Fontarabia, their intention being to wait until the Spaniards join them and then to go and encamp before Bayonne. That undertaking will not be easy, for the city is strong and well provided with all things necessary to its defence; and not long ago Prégent arrived there with six galleys and three other vessels. Add to this the season, for we are almost at the end of the summer, and the Bayonne district is very cold and wet. In no case could the English stay there long because of their lack of supplies, of which their camp is understood to be very short. Now that La Palice is at hand with so large a force, the undertaking seems the more preposterous.

'The Catholic King's opinion is that the English ought to move into Navarre, and then all together would advance into Béarn. I do not know what will be decided. Should they adhere to the Bayonne project, the result may easily be conjectured. Even if they go into Béarn, there will still be many difficulties, the French being present there in such large numbers, and enjoying an undoubted superiority in cavalry and artillery, for the Spaniards can spare for that expedition no more than 1,300 men-at-arms and 2,000 indifferently mounted light horse. As regards infantry, there are at present 7,000 Spaniards actually with the colours, and there are also the 8,000 English. . . . If the French are content to stand on the defensive and avoid the risk of an engagement, it seems that they can easily get through what little campaigning weather remains before the coming of winter. The English are believed to be already very ill content, having incurred much expense and wasted a whole summer with no advantage to themselves. For they were called in on the pretext of recovering the territories to which they lay claim; whereas they have witnessed no military exploits but such as have been undertaken for the benefit of others.'[1]

[1] Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, pp. 85–8.

The King of Navarre, who was aware of Dorset's temper, now approached him with offers of his daughter's hand, and this flattering proposal did not lessen the dissatisfaction which the English leader felt at the treatment that had been accorded to him by Ferdinand. Dorset was resentfully aware that it was to suit Ferdinand's plans that he had been detained on the frontier in ignominious inactivity. He realized that, even if Ferdinand's promised contingents should now join him, it would be too late, seeing that the French troops from Italy were reaching Guyenne. Moreover, inaction had ruined the morale of his force; he was short of supplies; the weather was breaking up; the roads would soon be impassable. After much complaint of the Spaniards' waste of time in Navarre, wrote Guicciardini on 30th September, the English told Ferdinand that in view of the lateness of the season they could undertake no campaigning that year; to stay on would involve a useless expense; so they meant to go home, and would leave within a fortnight.[1] Ferdinand saw that he could do nothing with them, and agreed to provide the necessary shipping, though he had previously communicated with Henry and procured an order that Dorset should stay on in Spain. Things had reached such a pass in the English ranks that the express command of their own sovereign went for nothing with the troops. The wrath of Henry seemed less terrible than the prolongation of an accursed service, and officers and men were agreed that they would go home at the first opportunity, be the consequences what they might.[2]

Their departure accentuated the change which was taking place in the situation on the Pyrenean front, where the Duke of Alva in obedience to his master's commands had advanced into the northern part of Navarre. This venturesome proceeding appeared to be out of keeping with the usual methods of the cautious Ferdinand, who would have hesitated to take the risk which it involved, if he had foreseen with what rapidity and thoroughness his enemies would prepare their counterstroke. The King of Navarre and his French allies had been straining every nerve to deal becomingly with the Spanish menace. The King had called for the help of all the nobles in his French fiefs, and had engaged several companies

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 118. [2] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 372–6.

of Stradiots to join the troops already mustered beneath his standards in Béarn. While his army had been assembling, the French also had rapidly increased their forces. By the departure of the English the large garrison of Bayonne was set free to join the Duke of Longueville on the frontier; La Palice had already joined him at the head of the troops from Italy; and 10,000 'landsknechte' presently marched in, of whom some had been enrolled by Fleuranges in Germany, and others were brought by the Duke of Suffolk from Lorraine. When the united forces were reviewed by Francis of Angoulême in the beginning of October, they consisted of 3,000 cavalry, 30,000 foot, the King of Navarre's feudal levies, and a complement of guns. This army was immeasurably superior in numbers to that commanded by the Duke of Alva, who now found himself isolated in a barren country, separated from his base by long lines of communication which he could not protect, and supported by an army unfitted as much by its condition as by its numbers to maintain a hold upon the territory which it had occupied.

The plan of the allies was to envelop Alva and cut off his retreat. They grouped their forces in three divisions. On their right one division under Lautrec was to cover and hold Bayonne. On their left another division under the King of Navarre and La Palice was to occupy the one practicable route by which Alva could withdraw to Pampeluna. In the centre the third division, under Francis of Angoulême and the Dukes of Bourbon and Longueville, was to advance frontally against Alva and contain him until La Palice should have worked round to his rear. If La Palice were to move quickly enough—and no exceptional rapidity was called for—the Spanish army could scarcely escape disaster. Unluckily, however, as events in Italy had proved, resolution and rapidity were not among the virtues which La Palice was accustomed to display. Nor did he display them now. He moved with extreme slowness, allowing himself to be detained by every trifling obstacle; he omitted to occupy the defiles through which Alva must withdraw; and when despite his tardiness he reached Pampeluna ahead of the Spaniards, he failed to take possession of the town or to close the approaches. Alva profited by these omissions and by the

slackness of d'Angoulême's attack to elude the clutches of his pursuers and slip unharmed into Pampeluna.

The campaign had begun in the middle of October, and November had now come with its menace of winter weather, which would make a siege a difficult and even hazardous operation. Nevertheless, the French, having permitted Alva to reach Pampeluna, determined to besiege him there, and on 3rd November invested the city. They were probably encouraged in their rather adventurous course by the likelihood that the King of Navarre's partisans would raise Pampeluna against the Spaniards, or at all events distract and embarrass them during an assault; but in this expectation, if they cherished it, they were doomed to disappointment, for the discipline of their army was as usual deplorable, and the troops by their bad conduct had completely alienated the sympathies of the population. Navarre was groaning under the miseries which Italy had long endured at the hands of the French soldiery: the country was given over to rapine, sacrilege, and lust; convents were entered, nuns violated, and relics and jewels stolen. The oppressors paid the price, not only in the loss of popular sympathy, but also in a denudation of the pillaged countryside so thorough as to leave them dependent upon supplies that had to be brought in by roads which the first snows of winter were beginning to block. When the siege had been in progress for three weeks, it became plain that, if Pampeluna were to be won, it must be reduced, not by blockade, but by assault. To prepare for such an assault, a three days' bombardment was carried out on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of November, and the assault itself was attempted on the following day. It failed miserably. The Spaniards, who had received intelligence of the French plan of attack, were posted in strength at the threatened points, and their splendid infantry were more than a match for the French irregulars, upon whom La Palice, withholding his men-at-arms and 'landsknechte', had laid the burden of the assault. After the failure of the assault a council of war was held in the French camp, in which it was acknowledged that the siege must be raised. On 30th November the camp was broken up, and the army, leaving its sick and wounded, but attempting to save its guns, set out upon its arduous and perilous retreat.

The cold was intense; snow blocked the roads; the troops were dispirited, hungry, and sickly; enemy bands hung about their rear, cutting off stragglers, and losing no opportunity to hamper the progress of the retreat. The force struggled on in the face of increasing difficulties, its numbers diminishing day by day, until it was compelled to abandon its guns, which it could no longer move; and on 6th December a sorry remnant limped into Bayonne. Jean de Navarre had lost a kingdom, and La Palice had been shorn of whatever shreds of military reputation might still belong to the discredited commander-in-chief of the French armies in the Milanese.[1]

Ferdinand had achieved his object, for his grasp on Navarre seemed to be secure, but, if that were possible, he had yet to mollify the ally whom he had duped and, in duping, had made ridiculous. To turn away Henry's wrath, he offered to co-operate in another attack upon France, proposing, however, that on this occasion the conquest of Guyenne should be effected by Spanish troops, whom Henry should partly pay, and that Henry's direct participation should be limited to an invasion of France by way of Calais. The English Government accepted the proposal in principle, but demurred to the financial stipulations, and accordingly proceeded to draft a new treaty, which they sent to Spain for ratification. When Ferdinand received this document, he realized that chance had put in his way another of those opportunities which he never scrupled to turn to account: by permitting the French to become aware of the existence of the English draft, he could almost certainly induce them to buy him off on favourable terms.[2] How he used the opportunity appears by the account which he himself gave to Guicciardini, from whose dispatches I will therefore again quote.

'It is no easy matter', wrote the ambassador on 7th February 1513, 'for the King of Spain to make war on France on the Pyrenean frontier, for the power of the King of France and the long distance for which the frontiers march together make it necessary to employ large forces. The scarcity of cash here makes it impossible for the King of

[1] Boissonnade, *op. cit.*, pp. 375–96.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. liii–lix.

Spain to provide such forces out of his own pocket, so that he must ask for money and men from his lords and people, and these demands, besides exciting disgust, are never met as promptly as the need requires. Thus it is not easy to collect a powerful army; nor can there be any certainty that the army, when collected, will be victorious, for their men-at-arms are few, indifferently mounted, and of small experience, and not only is their artillery not strong, but also they have not anything like the skill of the French in serving the guns. They themselves acknowledge their inferiority in these respects, but deem themselves to possess a superiority in light horse, their *genétaires* being numerous, and in infantry, who are thought good, though they are ill armed. Yet, if the French were to take the field in good numbers, and stiffened with Germans, who are held in the highest estimation here, it is believed that the odds would at the best be about equal. Moreover, it must inevitably happen either that the armies would stake their fortunes on the issue of a single battle—a thing much too dangerous for this King ever willingly to permit—or that the war would be long, and in the latter event the maintenance of the army would present great financial difficulties, for a long continuance of contributions is distasteful to the contributors, whilst the King's own resources would not be equal to so great an expense for more than a short time.

'For these reasons many believe that the King does not really relish the prospect of a war with France. And, indeed, in times past, even when the Queen was alive, there was often talk of a war with France, but there was never any result. Something of this same sort also happened during this last summer, when undoubtedly His Majesty displayed not the least ardour, and after the acquisition of Navarre became so dilatory that there would have been no operations at all, had not the French taken the initiative. His disinclination is now stronger than ever, in view of the recent conquest of Navarre and of the fact that many of its people favour the French, who have the legitimate sovereign on their side. Add to this that Ferdinand is merely a Regent in Castile, and that, albeit firmly enough established, he yet cannot act with quite the independence of a real King. He has to consider the consequences of defeat, and especially so

in Castile, where the lords do not approve of a French war . . . England, it is true, promises men, but it is doubtful, particularly after last summer's experience, how men of the two races would get on together in the field, or what good results would attend their conjunction. In view of these considerations and of Spanish apprehensions about Italy, where they put no trust in the League, it is the general opinion here that, if Ferdinand were offered an arrangement with France which would guarantee him quiet possession in Navarre and security elsewhere, he would accept it.'[1]

In his dispatch of 3rd March the ambassador was able to inform his Government that his prophecy was on the way to fulfilment. A few days ago, he said, a Spanish Franciscan had come from Blois, and with him a man sent by the Queen of France to the Queen of Spain. Ferdinand had given the ambassador a long account of the matter. The Franciscan, he had said, had been sent by him to England, to be his daughter's confessor; and, not liking so long a sea-voyage, the good Father asked for a safe-conduct to go through France, which was granted on condition that he travelled by way of Blois. When he got to that place, the Queen of France induced him to return to Spain, and sent with him one of her *valets de chambre*. The two came to the Queen of Spain, and suggested on behalf of the French Queen that the relationship between the two Kings called for an agreement; they were to say that they had found His Most Christian Majesty well disposed as regards the Church and other controversial matters; and they were to beg her to use her influence with King Ferdinand. Ferdinand told Guicciardini that he entertained some suspicions of the French King's motives, but, seeing himself approached by him, had listened to his overtures: he had gathered that France proposed a suspension of arms for a year, in all regions but Italy, with a view to the negotiation of a peace; and he understood that the Governor of Bayonne had been given power to conclude a truce. He himself had sent a man to Fontarabia to treat with the Governor of Bayonne, and if, when he learned the particulars, he should find the French proposal reasonable, he would accept it. He went on to explain the reasons which seemed to him to justify him in acting without

[1] Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, pp. 172–4.

reference to the League. He had made the League for the defence of the Church and of all Italy; the Pope and the Venetians had broken it, not having paid a penny towards the cost of his troops since the battle of Ravenna, though by the articles they were under an obligation to do so until the final expulsion of the French, who still held the citadels of Milan and Genoa. Whereas he had acted only for the common good, the Pope had been consistently selfish, taking for himself Parma, Piacenza, and Reggio, always keeping an eye on Ferrara, and neglecting his most obvious duty, namely, the reduction of the strong places in the Milanese. It was plain that the Pope aimed at turning Spain out of Naples and winning the dominion over all Italy. He, Ferdinand, had done his best to bring the Emperor and the Venetians together, and both had given him cause for complaint. Since, then, his allies had neglected to pay for his army in Italy, had by their selfishness brought all his efforts to naught, and had sought to throw upon him the burden of the war, which he was incapable of supporting, he had made up his mind to accept any reasonable proposal for a suspension of arms. He thought that it might have a good effect in Italy and bring the Italians together again. As for the English, he believed that they would have no objection, and in any case he would act only with their approval.[1]

The negotiations proceeded smoothly, and on 1st April a treaty was concluded at Orthez, which provided that elsewhere than in Italy there should be a truce for a year between France, Scotland, and Guelders on one side, and Spain, Austria, and England on the other. The unexpected development fluttered the diplomatic dove-cots. Machiavelli told his friend, Vettori, that he did not believe that there was any hidden meaning in the truce, but that he was disposed to think that Spain had blundered. In all probability Ferdinand's reasons for entering into the truce were that he was receiving but faltering help from his allies, perceived his own country to be exhausted, and was hampered by the absence of his best troops in Italy. By the truce he would open the eyes of his allies, remove the war from his own gates, and throw Italian affairs into a state of turmoil and

[1] Guicciardini, *Opere inedite*, vol. vi, pp. 176–80; and cf. *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. 98–100.

discord favourable to his ambitions. Moreover, the possibility of his defection would probably have the effect of compelling the Emperor and the English to make war upon France in earnest; and that might have been the object with which Ferdinand had negotiated the truce.[1] Meanwhile, the truce offered one solid advantage: Ferdinand wanted to consolidate his position in Navarre, and the truce would secure him in the peaceful possession of his new conquest.

[1] Villari, *The Life and Times of Niccolò Machiavelli*, Eng. trans., vol. ii, p. 55.

XXVII

NOVARA AND GUINEGATE

When Ferdinand negotiated the treaty of Orthez, he was actuated primarily, no doubt, by a desire to win security for his Pyrenean conquests, but he had also been influenced in some degree by his dissatisfaction with the political situation in Italy, where the Pope, after vain attempts to reconcile the Emperor and the Venetians, had thrown in his lot with Maximilian and was threatening to compel the Republic to concede almost all that was in dispute. A statesman of Ferdinand's sagacity could harbour no illusions about the inevitable results of the Pope's ill-judged policy, and his letters to his Viceroy in Naples revealed his apprehensions. The League, he wrote, had been making careful plans to bring Louis to his knees by a joint invasion of France; then, just at the moment when everything was ready for execution, the Emperor had spoiled it all by his uncontrollable hatred of the Venetians; the Pope by giving way to him had undone everything that had been done against France; and the outcome would be that the League would lose a powerful ally, whom France would gain.[1] The event was soon to justify that apprehension, for France and Venice were already in touch. After the French had been driven from Italy, Trivulzio had approached Antonio Giustinian, who had been made prisoner at Brescia, and, after sounding him about the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Louis and the Signory, had offered to take Giustinian to Blois, where he might discuss the matter with the King himself. Giustinian accepted the offer, and the two set out for the Court. When they reached Blois, Louis was laid up with an attack of gout, and the Venetian was therefore received in the first instance by Robertet, the Secretary. Robertet showed an evident desire to come to terms with the Republic. Using the dead Cardinal of Rouen as a scapegoat, he declared that the treatment which Venice had received at French hands had been due to the ill-judged ambition of the King's advisers; experience had shown that discord between the King and the Republic

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. li–lii, 89–90; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, pp. xvii–xviii.

was injurious, if not fatal, to both; and Giustinian, who would be set free without payment of a ransom for that purpose, would perform a service of the highest value, if he would return to his own country and press upon his Government the need for an agreement. Giustinian was then received in audience by the King, who confirmed all that had been said by his Minister; and, that done, he was furnished with a safe-conduct, equipped for the road, and dispatched upon his journey.

He reached Venice in an opportune moment for the success of his mission. Ill though the Signory had been treated by Louis in the past, that grievance was more or less forgotten in their present distrust of the pretensions of the Emperor and their resentment at the attitude of the Pope, so that, as Ferdinand had foreseen, they were in a mood to listen to Louis' overtures. Declaring that they welcomed the King's changed disposition, they authorized Giustinian to enter into preliminaries for the establishment of a perpetual peace and confederation between France and Venice. They proposed as the basis of the new alliance a joint offensive against those who occupied territories claimed by either of the contracting parties, a mutual restoration of exiles and release of prisoners, and the restitution of the French artillery which had passed by capture into Venetian hands; but they asserted categorically that there must be no quibbling over their claim to Cremona and the Ghiara d'Adda district, for those places were essential to the security of Venice, who therefore required that their cession should be regarded as an essential feature of the proposed convention. The demand for the cession of Cremona and the Ghiara d'Adda vexed the King, who told Andrea Gritti, another of the Venetian prisoners of war, that those districts belonged to the Duchy of Milan, declared that they could not on any account be sundered from it, and proposed that Venice should waive her claim to them and accept compensation elsewhere. Eventually, however, all difficulties were surmounted, and on 26th March a treaty was signed which formally constituted the new alliance in opposition to the League.[1]

[1] Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, vol. v, pp. 277–9; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xv, cols. 416, 498.

It would not be the fault of the French King if any rankling memories should temper the warmth of the new friendship. 'The King's Majesty', wrote Gritti to his brother in April, 'pays me attentions which astonish the whole Court. When on the coming of M. de la Trémoille, who along with Trivulzio is to command in Italy, I waited upon him in that lord's company, he gave orders that I should be present whenever Italian affairs are under discussion. Accordingly, I then and there retired with the Councillors to whom the business is entrusted, discussed with them what was to be done, and remained with them till all was settled. Returning then to the King's presence, we acquainted him with the result of our deliberations, when His Majesty, after making such modifications as he deemed desirable, gave the necessary instructions for the expedition, sent out orders to his cavalry and infantry leaders, and did all that was necessary for the war. That done, His Majesty turned to me in the presence of M. de la Trémoille and the other Councillors, and in a solemn manner addressed me thus: "Monsieur Andrea, I am glad to have you at my side, to advise me about Italian affairs; but seeing that I cannot here avail myself of your services in any other manner, I think that in my interest and in that of the Signory you must accompany my army, in order that the army may benefit by your counsel and your valour; and so I would have you go with M. de la Trémoille to join Signor Gian Trivulzio, and together you will order and dispose matters in this war: and such is my desire." And then, turning to La Trémoille, he said: "Arrange, not only that in all consultations and discussions Monsieur Andrea be present, but also that all be decided upon his most expert advice: this will have the additional advantage that he can keep the Signory informed, so that their military affairs may be ordered as may be most convenient." Nothing loath to get away from here, I replied suitably to these compliments, expressing my alacrity to perform whatever His Majesty might command; and so by the grace of God I shall shortly be setting out with M. de la Trémoille. You may take it from me that the King will carry through his Italian programme in the most splendid fashion. God grant that all go well.'[1]

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 212–13.

Fraught though it was with immediate consequences for Italy and the world, the reconstitution of the Franco-Venetian alliance was eclipsed by another event which occurred during the opening weeks of the year 1513. In the month of February Pope Julius fell ill, and in the course of this attack it became plain that his fiery spirit had at length overtaxed the iron constitution which had so often falsified the predictions of the physicians. Seriously ill from the first, Julius grew rapidly weaker, and on 20th February he died. On 4th March the Cardinals then present in Rome entered into Conclave for the choice of his successor, a choice which would be of more than usual consequence, having regard to the political and ecclesiastical conditions of the time and to the unhappy divisions, exemplified in the Council of Pisa and the Holy League, which formed the legacy from the late Pontiff's reign. Divided as upon such occasions it so often was by the clash of personalities and the fierce strife of contending ambitions, the College was for once agreed in this, that the interests of the Cardinals, the Church, and the world required that the new Pope should differ as widely as possible from his immediate predecessors. The coincidence of views in this regard issued in rapid agreement about the selection of a candidate, and on 11th March it was announced that Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici would mount St. Peter's throne under the name of Pope Leo X.

The new bearer of the Triple Crown had been born in December 1479, and was not yet thirty-five years of age. He was the second son of the famous Lorenzo by his marriage with Clarissa Orsini, and he had become the head of the Medici family when the boat in which Piero was fleeing to Gaeta had foundered in the storm-tossed waters of the Garigliano. Alike in that capacity and as the agent of Julius he had played his part in public affairs, and a rather colourless mediocrity seemed to be the distinguishing feature of the personality which had been revealed by the test of that experience. If there was nothing great, neither was there anything vicious, in his character, and if his mind was devoid of salient qualities, at least it was not marred by glaring defects. His morals were good; his views were liberal; his nature was easy-going, gentle, and kindly. His manners, which were engaging, went far to counteract the feeling of

repulsion excited by his markedly unprepossessing appearance. With the common sense and calculating prudence which characterized the stock from which he sprang he combined its cultured tastes, delight in magnificence, and love of ease, and none could doubt that his policy would be the direct antithesis of that which the warlike Julius had pursued. More than anything else, the prospect of a peaceful and splendid Pontificate, supported by the prestige of the newly restored Medici power, had won for him the suffrages which had raised him to power.

The news of his election was received with mingled feelings of pleasure and surprise. In Italy men welcomed an event which seemed to promise the peace and repose which the country so sorely needed; but they marvelled nevertheless that the event should have come to pass. That the College should have accorded its favour to so young a candidate was thought the more extraordinary in that the election was untainted by any suspicion of simony, a practice in which Giovanni de' Medici would have been too poor to indulge, even if a recent bull of Julius had not made it impossible. Of the twenty-five Cardinals in the Conclave, wrote the Venetian ambassador, twenty-two were his seniors; yet they chose him; nor did he owe the choice to simony, for his income was no more than 10,000 ducats, and he had no benefices to give away. In such circumstances the world could only conclude that he had been 'chosen miraculously, by the will of God'.[1] Even in France the news of his election was well received, for no other candidate would have been as acceptable to the French Government as this peace-loving Florentine. The hopes of an accommodation which the event aroused were the more welcome in that Louis himself was in a pacific mood; at the time of Julius' fatal seizure he had been engaged in an attempt to patch up his quarrel with the Pope, and an envoy had carried to the Papal Court letters in the Queen's own hand, which were understood to contain liberal offers by France. The Queen, said a Mantuan envoy, was incessantly badgering the Pope to take the King into his favour, and the King himself was reported to have a new heart and a contrite spirit within him.[2] 'To-day', wrote

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, col. 28.

[2] *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, pp. 412–13.

Acciajuoli, the Florentine ambassador, from Blois on 16th March, 'your courier came with the news of the Papal election, having performed the journey in less than four days, which is thought wonderfully quick, and already a whole day has passed without receipt of the news from any other quarter. When the courier came, I went at once to wait upon His Majesty, and finding him, as it chanced, in company with the Queen, I was able to acquaint both of them simultaneously with the news of the Papal election. The news was received by both with such evident pleasure as made it plain that no other choice could have been more agreeable to them or better calculated to inspire the hope that they may effect an improvement in their affairs. The King kept on saying "He is a man to my taste, because he is a good man, and from a good man naught but good is to be expected". The news was likewise received with the utmost contentment by the Lords of the Council, and particularly so by Robertet, who is a good friend to Florence, and believes that the event must add to her power and prestige. And, indeed, the opinion here of the Pope's goodness is such that the whole Court is delighted, and looks for a happy issue from the present afflictions.' [1]

The French rejoicings were somewhat premature. Leo X did not, indeed, harbour the feelings of vindictive hatred by which his predecessor had been consumed, but the sentiments which he cherished were by no means favourable to France. There was, in truth, no reason why he should regard that country with affection, for the memory of former friendship had been effaced by the recent experience of injury and wrong. Leo could not forget that the coming of Charles VIII had been the signal for the downfall of his family, or that his relatives had wandered as homeless exiles till the triumph of the enemies of France had cleared the way for a restoration of the Medicean régime. Neither could he forget how his own Legatine mission to Romagna had terminated in his arrest at the hands of French soldiers, or how little cause he had to thank his captors for his escape from that humiliating experience. His paramount desire was to re-establish peace in Italy and to restore repose to Christendom, and there could be neither peace nor repose

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 133–4.

so long as a new conquest of northern Italy remained the object of Franco-Venetian policy. Unable to secure the abandonment of this policy by peaceful persuasion, Leo adhered to the new treaty by which in April 1513 Henry and Maximilian pledged themselves to oppose it by force of arms. Yet in spite of unfavourable appearances the French were substantially justified in welcoming Leo's accession. If Leo adhered to the hostile league, he did so much more because he could not venture to adopt an attitude of neutrality than because he intended to pursue an anti-French policy. To those who urged him to declare war on Louis XII he replied that he had been made Pope, not to levy war, but to seek peace and ensue it. He sought a reconciliation with the schismatic Cardinals, who were permitted to return to Rome and make their submission; and in this his avowed aim was to pave the way for a reconciliation with Louis as a preliminary to a complete termination of the schism. Louis could not as yet reckon the Pope as a friend, but the hostility of Leo X might almost be counted as friendship by one who had experienced the dread enmity of Julius II.

Meanwhile the political situation remained what it had been, and the day drew near which Louis XII and the Signory had appointed for the initiation of their joint adventure in the Milanese. The internal condition of that luckless province augured well for the success of their undertaking, for the people of Milan were harried by Swiss and Spanish armies, and lay crushed beneath the taxation which the Duke was obliged to impose in the hope of satisfying the demands of the rapacious troops who buttressed up his power. French misdeeds had therefore been forgotten in the agony of a greater suffering, and many Milanese gentlemen had approached Louis with invitations to deliver them from their martyrdom. Early in May the French army, composed of 7,000 cavalry and 14,000 foot, of whom more than a half were 'landsknechte', crossed the Alps under Louis de la Trémoille and Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, and on 12th May the French standards were hoisted once again over the walls of Alessandria. Simultaneously with the French attack the Venetian army advanced from the east under the command of Bartolommeo d'Alviano, who had been appointed by the Signory to the post of Captain-General. Alviano

conducted his campaign with the rash precipitancy which invariably characterized his actions. His idea was that Venice could not secure her conquests unless the French position in Milan were also assured, and he was therefore eager to join hands with La Trémoille and co-operate with him in the subjection of the Duchy. Without the knowledge of the Senate, who supposed that he would direct his efforts to the recovery of Venetian possessions, and against the advice of the Proveditore and his own officers, who dwelt on the difficulty of a retreat in the event of a misfortune, he advanced rapidly, crossed the Mincio, received the submission of Valeggio and Peschiera, recovered the town of Cremona, where a French garrison still held out in the citadel, sent a detachment to occupy Brescia, and led the bulk of his forces on till he had reached Cava on the Po. Whilst he was advancing, his allies in the western districts of the Duchy were likewise occupying the country without encountering resistance; and when Genoa, where the French flag still flew over the Lanterna, had surrendered upon the approach of a French fleet, the King of France had regained nearly all that he had ever held in the dominions of the Sforzas.[1]

In this crisis of his fortunes Massimiliano Sforza received no help from the Spanish army, which lay inert at Piacenza under Ramon de Cardona, but 4,000 Swiss had been sent to him by the Diet, and at the head of this force he threw himself into the town of Novara. Here he was soon besieged by the bulk of the French forces. Leaving a garrison to hold Alessandria, the French left that place on 30th May, on the 31st lodged at a village called Pieve del Cairo, and advancing thence by easy stages, were under the walls of Novara by Friday, 3rd June. Everything conspired to make them confident of success. Whilst the enemy were few in number and scantily supplied, their own army was large and amply provisioned; their guns were powerful; and it was known that fear of the Swiss alone restrained the townspeople from offering the surrender of their city. The place, too, was rich in inspiriting memories, for here Louis had made his heroic defence whilst Charles VIII was falling back from Naples, and here the father of Massimiliano had been captured, surrendering to the very captains who now led the French host.

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. iii, pp. 50–4.

The effects of a heavy bombardment were speedily felt in the besieged city, where on 4th June a great piece of wall crumbled in ruins. Adherents of the French in the town sent them information that Massimiliano was showing signs of alarm: he thought that his 4,000 Swiss could not much longer keep the besiegers at bay, and he knew that his provisions would be exhausted at the end of two days. He was therefore preparing to abandon the town and take refuge in the citadel, whither he was causing the greater part of his guns and provisions to be transferred. On the evening of the 4th, about an hour before sunset, the Swiss made a sortie, but were driven back by the French, who pursued them on to the walls, and it was the general opinion that, if an assault had then been delivered, the town might have been captured. The Royal generals shrank from an enterprise which they knew to be costly and believed to be superfluous: Novara could not be stormed without sustaining damage; defences could not be carried without loss, when Swiss soldiers manned them; and, if their information could be trusted, lack of provisions would soon ensure a bloodless triumph. The troops were therefore held back, and the next day was devoted to a continuance of the bombardment. During its progress information reached La Trémoille and his colleagues which inspired some doubt of the wisdom of their policy of self-restraint. The Diet had awakened to the precarious situation of Massimiliano and his mercenaries, and on 31st May it had decided that a second army should be dispatched to the Milanese. This force was composed of 8,000 men, and marched in three divisions. One was delayed upon the road, but the two others joined hands at Arona, and, hearing there of Novara's plight, resolved to hasten forward without awaiting their belated comrades. That these troops were approaching and might reach Novara that evening was the disquieting news which was imparted to the French leaders early in the afternoon of Sunday, 5th June. Upon its receipt they decided to suspend the investment of Novara, lest they should be caught between the garrison of the town and the force which was marching to its relief. Accordingly, they gave orders to break up the camp and march to a place in the neighbourhood called Trecate, where there was a good camping-ground, and where

they would be well placed to prevent a junction between the two Swiss armies. The French marched off in battle order, and encamped that evening in the open country not far from Trecate. About two hours before midnight the Swiss relief force entered Novara.[1]

As soon as the Swiss forces joined hands, their chiefs met in council to consider the situation, and as a result of their deliberations it was decided to deliver an immediate attack upon the French without awaiting the third relief division, which had been delayed upon the road. This decision has usually been ascribed to the national lust for battle, but was more probably inspired by the fear of short commons, for if Massimiliano's garrison were in danger of scarcity on 4th June, there could have been few victuals to spare after the needs of 4,500 hungry men had been supplied on the evening of 5th June. Whatever the motive, the decision was bold, for, as Guicciardini observed, the Swiss were few against many, and with an indifferent artillery and no horse must oppose an army powerful in those arms. Early in the morning of 6th June their troops came out from Novara, marching in three divisions, which were respectively three thousand, four thousand, and fifteen hundred strong. The French camp was pitched in a plain intersected by dykes, broken by swamps, and covered in part by woodland. The night was dark, with cloud and driving rain, and the Swiss, advancing in silence, made good progress before the alarm was raised in the unsuspecting French camp. Taken wholly unawares though they were, and with the partial darkness of dawn adding to the confusion of a surprise, the French were well handled by their experienced leaders, and the Swiss advance guard was quickly brought under the fire of the French guns. The fire was heavy, and men fell fast in the Swiss ranks, but grimly the division held on upon its way, and was presently engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with the 'landsknechte', who were defending the French guns. Whilst thus engaged, it was attacked impetuously in flank and rear by three companies of men-at-arms, who broke its serried ranks; whereupon Massimiliano and his Italian companions, seeing the confusion and supposing the day to be lost, dispersed in

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 461–2; Oechsli, *History of Switzerland*, Eng. trans., pp. 42–5.

flight, to spread through Novara and more distant refuges the news that the Swiss were beaten.

The attack was not yet spent, however, for the main Swiss division had not yet come into action. This body, having turned aside from the road which the advance guard had followed, had been creeping forward stealthily along the dykes, concealed by a strip of woodland and by inequalities in the ground. On its way it came near to effecting an important capture. When the French had encamped, Gritti, the Venetian, who had been attached to their head-quarters, had been sent by La Trémoille to wait in Trecate for the Général des Finances of Normandy, who was expected shortly with a large supply of cash. Awakened by the sound of gun-fire, Gritti mounted his horse and rode towards the camp, to find out what was happening. On the way he caught sight of a moving column, and, supposing them to be French, went forward to meet them. He was within a stone's throw of the leading men when he discovered his mistake, and turned in flight. A few shots from crossbows followed him, but not a man left his place in the ranks. The same discipline was maintained when the column reached the undefended French baggage train, the enticement of which would have proved too much for the self-restraint of most troops in that period. With ranks unbroken and discipline unimpaired, the division marched on, and its advent proved to be the turning-point in the action. The French infantry found themselves unexpectedly assailed in flank, and lost their heads. The cavalry tried to come to their aid, but their movements were impeded by the swamps and dykes. Little opposition was therefore offered to the advancing column as it approached nearer and nearer to the guns, and the 'landsknechte' were left without support to bear the brunt of the combined Swiss attack. They behaved with great gallantry, and fell almost to a man in a fight against overwhelming odds. 'The French men-at-arms', said an eye-witness, 'could do nothing to help the guns by reason of all the swamps and dykes, and, seeing those lost, they took to their heels, it being the way of a Frenchman to think that he has lost his right hand, if he find himself without a gun.' [1]

The battle had lasted about two hours. The losses in the

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 462–3.

Swiss ranks were variously estimated at 1,000, 2,000, and 3,000 men, and they may well have been heavy, for the army owed its triumph to dogged hand-to-hand fighting. Some guns they had indeed possessed, consisting for the most part of pieces captured from the French when La Palice was driven from Italy, and these they had brought towards the field; but they had been of small advantage, for some had never reached the scene of action, and the rest had stuck in a swamp, where they could give little help to their side. The French losses, which occurred almost entirely among the foot, and chiefly in the ranks of the gallant German mercenaries, were much more numerous, and would have been heavier still, if the victors had been in a position to pursue. 'If only we had had cavalry', declared one of the Duke's companions, 'not a man would have got away.' To the same circumstance it was due that the Général des Finances in Trecate managed to escape with his war chest of a quarter of a million *livres*. Even as things were, however, the Swiss returned from the battle with twenty-two French guns, many standards, all the tents and pavilions, the whole of the baggage, and an immense number of horses, mules, and wagons. The remnants of the beaten army hurried away by the Mont Cenis across the Alps, leaving Genoa to change sides once more under a Fregoso Doge, and exposing Bartolommeo d'Alviano to suffer the consequences of his temerity. Alviano retired precipitately, with Cardona's Spaniards in hot pursuit, and for the second time since Agnadello the sound of enemy guns was heard on the Lagoons.[1]

This reverse was an important incident in a series of misfortunes which within the space of a few months were to turn the foremost military power of Europe into the hapless and well-nigh helpless victim of insolent aggression. In that tragedy the Swiss armies continued to play a part, but henceforth the leading rôle was to be filled by the English King. Henry VIII felt bitterly the disgrace which Dorset's fiasco had brought upon English arms, and in his determination to efface the stain he was so eager for war that no one

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvi, cols. 460–3; *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, pp. 447–50; Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. iii, pp. 50–9; Oechsli, *History of Switzerland*, Eng. trans., pp. 42–6.

could put it out of his head.[1] 'So signal a failure at the outset of his reign, and in the first attempt which England had made for many years to take part in a Continental war, was infinitely more disastrous than it appears to us at this day, and threw an air of ridicule over the King's more ambitious pretensions. To the veteran politicians of Europe, accustomed to regard France as the first military power of the time, habituated to this conviction by its splendid victories in Italy, dreading its shrewd diplomacy and experienced statesmen, it appeared more than ordinarily quixotic and absurd for a young sovereign, who had never witnessed a siege, and never seen a sword drawn except at a tournament, to undertake the conquest of so great a kingdom. And, beside the blot on the national escutcheon, the late failure was the more disastrous from its effects on the minds of those whom Henry wished to conciliate, and whose co-operation, or at least whose tacit consent, was requisite before he could prosecute his cherished design with any tolerable chance of success. To invade France on the Flemish frontier, as he had proposed, it was expedient for him to gain the goodwill of the Emperor and his grandson Charles, Prince of Castile. The toilsome negotiations by which he endeavoured to fix the shambling, shuffling, irresolute Maximilian to some definite and distinct arrangement are detailed in the letters of Poyninges and his associates. Much, however, as Maximilian hankered after English crowns, it was easy to see that he placed little confidence in the warlike genius of England; he had no expectation that she would succeed in the struggle. He dallied with France, and offered but a feeble resistance to its fascinations; whilst, on the other hand, the governors of the Prince of Castile, the betrothed of the King's own sister, made no secret of their little esteem for the English arms. They were at no pains to dissemble their preference for its rival, and looked with studied contempt on Henry's preparations. Had any wavered before, the failure in Guienne was decisive.'[2]

So wrote the editor of Henry's State papers, not without some slight excess of emphasis. It was true that the Guyenne

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, p. 384.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xxvii.

affair had not augmented the prestige of England; but the reconstitution of the anti-French league by the treaty of Malines, which was the work of English diplomacy, showed that the powers did not over-estimate the importance of the discreditable incident. Then, as so often since, the mainspring of the Continental coalition was forged of English gold. The Emperor, in particular, was to be the recipient of an enormous subsidy; but the co-operation of the Austrian Princes was essential, not only for the sake of their direct military support, but also because the English bases must be sought for in their territory.

Although Maximilian had ended by joining the league, it was Venice, and not France, which had lately filled his mind, and Louis, if he had thought it worth while to purchase the isolation of England by the surrender of his Italian designs, could almost certainly have kept the Emperor out of the enemy camp by the bait which had caught him once before at Cambray. The policy of Spain was illumined by the treaty of Orthez, which showed that Ferdinand was divided between his fear of France and his fear of the consequences, should France be pressed too far. On the one hand, he felt sure that, if France were to recover her former strength, she would seek to oust him from Navarre, make another bid for the possession of Milan, and perhaps even challenge his occupation of Naples. On the other hand, he could not doubt that, if France were to be abased and dismembered, the process would tend chiefly to the aggrandizement of the Austrian Princes, and he was satisfied that in that event he would have to look for a renewed challenge to his position in Castile. The situation was perplexing, and Ferdinand dealt with it in characteristic fashion when he joined Henry's league against France in the very moment of the signature of the truce with Louis. Orthez and Malines offset each other, the one assuring Louis that he had little to fear from Spanish hostility, and the other warning him that he had as little to expect from Spanish friendship.

Apart from Venice, whose alliance could profit him nothing in the defence of his own dominions, there was but one quarter in which Louis might hope to secure active support. That quarter was Scotland, the country which for so many years had been bound to his own by her fear and

hatred of the common enemy, and the King of which had soon after his accession renewed the old alliance with a secret promise to attack England, if ever England should attack France. The Franco-Scottish alliance had not been severed by King James IV's marriage with a Princess of England or by the treaty of perpetual peace by which that union was accompanied. James had reminded Henry that he had other engagements besides his treaty with England, and even before the death of his father-in-law he had shown a tendency to side with France. Representatives of Louis XII continued to go to and fro, and one of them, M. de la Motte, became a familiar figure in the Scottish Court, where he was always received with marked honour. Though solicited by Pope Julius himself, James IV steadfastly refused to be drawn into the anti-French league, and his loyalty to France was fortified by incidents which augmented his dislike of England. He fell out with his brother-in-law over the question of jewels bequeathed to Queen Margaret by her father and retained by Henry VIII. Subjects of his, who happened to be also his kinsmen, were arrested in England when journeying through that country without safe-conducts on their return from France. The vessels of his pirate captains, the Bartons, were seized by English men-of-war, and were detained as prizes in spite of Scottish remonstrances.[1]

In these and other grievances there existed, in the words of a brilliant Scottish writer, 'all possible material for a deadly quarrel with England. Henry, with France on his hands, tried to conciliate Scotland; but James would not treat while Henry was a party to the league against France. James was determined not to desert France, but otherwise he laboured for peace, trying to reconcile Julius and the French King. . . . Meanwhile de la Motte went and came from France, urging Scotland to war with England for the sake of the Ancient League. The moment was one of the most critical in our history. France was attacked by a great league: Maximilian, the Pope, and England were united against her. If James could have held his hand, the fate of Scotland might have been less gloomy. But the two old allies had seen much sunshine and much storm together; France had diverted Edward III from Scotland when, under

[1] Andrew Lang, *History of Scotland*, vol. i, pp. 363–7.

David II, she seemed ready to fall into his hands. If France went down before Henry VIII, the turn of Scotland was likely to follow, as James clearly foresaw. Then there were the unsettled quarrels, the family feud about the jewels, and the final appeal of the French Queen to James. Hot-headed and high-hearted, James carried into foreign affairs the spirit of a knight-errant. But he had also shrewdness enough to see that the ambition of Henry, and his greed for renown, and his possession of his father's treasures, were all so many menaces to Scotland. Now, with Henry engaged in France, or never, was James' chance. He renewed the Ancient League "against all mortal", and Louis in return naturalized all Scots then resident in France. . . . Then in May de la Motte came to France, bearing the fatal turquoise ring from the French Queen, Anne of Brittany, who dubbed James her knight, and bade him, for her sake, step three feet and strike one blow on English ground.'[1]

The object of James was honourable, and his conduct was straightforward: he wished to prevent an English attack on his ally, and he thought that Henry would hesitate to deliver such an attack, if certified beforehand that in such an event he would have to reckon with Scottish hostility. There was no thought of waiting until Henry was wrestling with his adversary and then stabbing him in the back. When an English envoy came to Scotland in March 1513, James made no attempt to lull him into security by deceptive promises; he undertook merely that he would not attack Henry without giving him previous notice, at the same time letting it be understood that Henry must look to himself, if he should venture to begin hostilities in France. Henry disregarded the warning, crossed to Calais, marched into Flanders, and besieged Thérouanne. How James redeemed his promise is told in a document of 11th August 1513, which has been preserved among the State Papers of the time.

'The 11th day of August 1513, the King being in his rich tent, the herald of the King of Scots was brought to him and gave his message that, having now besieged Terwyn 2 months without being fought with and having, by his invasion, caused the King of France to recall his army from Milan, Henry should be content and return home without making

[1] Andrew Lang, *History of Scotland*, vol. i, pp. 374–6.

further war. The King, standing still with sober countenance, having his hand on his sword, said: "Have ye now your tale at an end?" The herald of arms said: "Nay." "Say forth then," said the King. "Sir, he summoneth your Grace to be at home in your realm in the defence of his ally." Then the King answered and said: "Ye have well done your message; nevertheless it becometh ill a Scot to summon a King of England. And tell your master that I mistrust not so the realm of England but he shall have enough to do whensoever he beginneth; and also I trusted not him so well but that I provided for him right well, and that shall he well know. And he to summon me, now being here for my right and inheritance! It would much better [have] agreed with his honour to have summoned me being at home; for he knew well before my coming hither that hither would I come. And now to send me summons! Tell him there shall never Scot cause me to return my face. And where he layeth the French King to be his ally, it would much better agree and become him, being married to the King of England's sister, to recount the King of England his ally. And now, for a conclusion, recommend me to your master and tell him if he be so hardy to invade my realm or cause to enter one foot of my ground, I shall make him as weary of his part as ever was man that began any such business. And one thing I ensure him by the faith that I have to the Crown of England and by the word of a King, there shall never King nor Prince make peace with me that ever his part shall be in it. Moreover, fellow, I care for nothing but for misentreating of my sister, that would God she were in England on a condition she cost the Scots King not a penny." The herald answered and said: "If your Grace would give her your whole realm, she would forsake it to be entreated as she is." The King said: "I know the contrary and know what all this matter meaneth; the King your master has been anointed with the crowns of the sun, but I trust ere it be long the French King shall have enough to do to keep his crowns for himself." '[1]

Such was the prologue to Flodden. In following the story of Anglo-Scottish relations, however, we have anticipated the course of events, and we must now retrace our steps, that

[1] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 972.

we may consider the situation as it existed in the earlier months of the year 1513.

In the spring of that year great naval activity prevailed on both sides of the Channel. The events of the winter had left no doubt that Henry VIII was serious in his intention to attempt an invasion of France, and Louis XII's Government were alive to the fact that the success or failure of his enterprise might depend upon the command of the sea. Intent though they had been on their preparations for the reconquest of Milan, they had therefore striven with equal energy to assure themselves the possession of maritime supremacy; and the reports of Henry's spies bore witness to the extent of their efforts. Henry learned that more than sixty war vessels were lying in the harbours of Normandy and Brittany, that twenty others were in process of being fitted out, and that ten galleys, armed with heavy guns, were in readiness to co-operate with the sailing ships. This considerable fleet would no longer be handled by René de Clermont, for Louis had superseded the commander whose incompetence or cowardice had been proved in the operations of the previous year; the Seigneur du Chillou had been appointed to the command of the sea-going ships, and the galleys flew the flag of Prégent de Bidoux, who had been summoned from his usual sphere, that he might employ against the English the skill and daring which had carried his fame to the remotest corners of the Mediterranean Sea. To have navigated the galleys safely to Channel ports was in itself no mean feat of seamanship, for it had been necessary to circumnavigate the Iberian peninsula, where the greater part of the littoral was in hostile hands, offering to a French sailor no help in the hour of his need nor any refuge from nature in the time of its wrath. The hospitality of Portuguese harbours had, indeed, been extended to the galleys, and with that assistance they had contrived to accomplish their difficult journey. At Bayonne, where they had entered a French port for the first time since sailing from their Mediterranean base, their presence had contributed, as we have seen, to the miscarriage of Dorset's campaign.

The plan which had been conceived by the new French leaders was to cripple the English fleet by a surprise attack on one of its naval bases; and, entrusting to Prégent the task

of reconnoitring the English coast, du Chillou set sail with the Norman section of his fleet, and appointed the Channel Islands as a rendezvous for the ships from Brest. Further than that, however, the French did not proceed, for the prosecution of their plan was then made impossible by the movements of the enemy. In the English dockyards also the winter had witnessed a feverish naval activity. Believing as they did that the French would endeavour to put to sea with an armada of sufficient strength to prevent Henry's passage, the English had occupied themselves in the preparation of a fleet strong enough to frustrate the French design. This fleet, which was again under Howard's command, was ready for sea by the middle of March, and put to sea on the 19th of that month, and although adverse weather detained it for a time in the Downs, it reached the Devon coast in time to prevent the attack which du Chillou and Prégent were meditating. Not only so, but Howard was in an aggressive mood, and the French commanders knew that they must look to their own safety when they learned that twenty-four English sail had stood out from Plymouth Sound, heading for the Breton coast.

At that time Prégent de Bidoux, who had been much troubled by illness among his men, had put back to make good the deficiencies in his crews, and he was lying in the little harbour at Portrieux, between Saint-Brieuc and Paimpol, when he received word that the Vice-Admiral was retiring from Guernsey, because the enemy were approaching. Prégent immediately left his moorings in an attempt to reach the protection of the Brest defences, but he found that du Chillou's warning had come too late; the English armada had already slipped across the Channel and had placed itself between himself and his base. Howard had sailed from Plymouth on 10th April at the head of a fleet of twenty-four ships of the line, which were manned by nearly 3,000 sailors and carried more than 4,500 troops. His business was to deal with the French fleet in such a way as to ensure an unmolested passage for the English troops, and he had therefore headed for Brest, supposing that the enemy forces were most likely to be found in the neighbourhood of their naval head-quarters. And find them he did, or such part of them as had not sailed with the Vice-Admiral to

Guernsey, but so placed that it was hard to get at them, for they lay in a spot naturally difficult of access and under the shelter of strong land defences. Howard made an attempt to dislodge them, but it had no other effect than to send an English vessel to destruction on the rocks. He could not blockade, for he was very short of victuals, his men subsisting on one meal and one drink a day. He was therefore compelled to withdraw, and began to retire along the coast. He had gone but a short way when in the neighbourhood of Le Conquet, in a bay called the Baie des Blancs-Sablons, he came upon the French galleys, which had been working their way round to Brest, and had run inshore for shelter when it was learnt that English warships were at sea near by.

Though Prégent's retreat had been discovered, that energetic and provident officer had not allowed himself to be taken unawares: with an enemy fleet operating on the coast, he had foreseen the possibility of discovery, and had taken measures to make himself safe from attack. His galleys lay moored in shallow water, where no sea-going vessel could come near them, and guns and crossbows were placed in readiness on the rocky shores which commanded the approach. Mariners in Howard's fleet who understood their business told the Admiral that he was in presence of a hornet's nest which it would be wiser to leave alone. Howard, however, refused to listen. He knew the importance of a well-timed blow; not improbably he had orders from his master to deliver such a blow at all costs;[1] he had failed at Brest; here was another chance, and he must not let it slip. It is certain, too, that, whatever may have been the opinion of the sailors, there was a strong disposition among the officers to under-estimate the danger of an attack. The galley was a craft wholly unfamiliar in northern waters, and with characteristic insular scorn of new-fangled ideas and unfamiliar weapons Howard's officers dismissed Prégent and his 'spiders' with a shrug of contempt. So great was their confidence that they persuaded Howard to waive the precaution, which he himself had at first favoured, of landing troops near Le Conquet to take Prégent's land defences in

[1] 'The king wrote to him sharply again, commanding him to accomplish that which appertained to his duty: which caused him to adventure things further than wisdom would he should': Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 575.

rear. A more hazardous proposal held the field. Whilst the big ships stood off the Goulet, to prevent a sortie by the French fleet, Howard and his chief captains were to hurl themselves upon the galleys in their two row-barges and such other small craft as could enter the shallows of the enemy's anchorage.

By Monday, 25th April, Howard's dispositions were made, and in the afternoon of that day the waters of the remote and secluded Breton bay reflected an unusual scene, as fifty or sixty small craft from the English fleet followed their two barges to the assault of Prégent's galleys. In one barge went Howard with eighty officers and men; in the other went Lord Ferrers; and behind them Sherborne and Sidney, Wallop and Cheyne followed close astern, to do their part with the band of brothers to whom the Admiral had entrusted the honour of supporting him when he 'enterprised for to win the galleys'. It was ordained that the honour should cost them dear. A deadly fire swept over the boats as they came within range of the shore defences, and in one of them at the head of the line two-thirds of the crew fell in the first few minutes of the action. Despite the tornado Howard's barge stood on, and did not stay her course until she was alongside Prégent's galley. Either Howard had no grappling irons with him in the barge, or with memories of the *Regent's* fate fresh in his mind he feared to use them; at any rate, when he leapt on board the galley, his barge was secured to her by nothing more substantial than a rope hitched round the capstan. The rope was quickly severed by Prégent's men, or was slipped by some of Howard's own sailors, misliking their proximity to the French crossbows and guns; the barge began to drift away; and the English Admiral was left on the Frenchman's deck with none to support him but the handful of men who had emulated his gallantry. 'Come aboard again! Come aboard again!' he shouted to his barge, but she could not or would not obey him, and continued to drift away. More easily handled than the barge, or manned by braver crews, some of the small craft made courageous efforts to rescue the Admiral from his peril, and conspicuous among them was the boat in which Sherborne and Sidney struggled to gain contact with Prégent's vessel; but no small craft could hope to live in the inferno of shot from galleys

and batteries, crossbows and guns. In one English boat forty-five men fell, in another thirty-two, and in a third not one unwounded man was left on board. Howard was beyond the hope of rescue, as he himself had known, when he saw his barge break away. His first act was to take from his neck the whistle which denoted his rank and to hurl it into the sea. Then he turned to join his comrades in misfortune, resolved that, if he could not save them, he would at least sell his life as dearly as he might. The struggle was brief, for Prégent's men were many, and the English were few; and whilst the crew of the receding barge could still follow the incidents occurring on the galley's deck, they saw their compatriots pressed backwards by many pikes and thrust overboard into the sea. The brief fight was over, and naught remained for Howard's forces but to make off, bleeding and crippled, to their ships.

Next day an English vessel, flying a flag of truce, approached Prégent's anchorage. It had come to make inquiries about Howard's fate in the hope that he might have been captured in the struggle aboard the galley and then be held to ransom. That lingering hope Prégent was fain to dash: Howard was not among the prisoners, and the conclusion appeared to be irresistible that he was amongst those who had been driven overboard and drowned. To set all doubts at rest, the French commander undertook to give orders that the bay should be dragged, and two days later the sea gave up its prey; the whistle of command was also recovered from the water. The body of his gallant adversary Prégent caused to be embalmed, awaiting instructions for its burial: the whistle he sent to the Queen of France, from whose hands he had received his own.

Frustrated in their enterprise and bereft of their leader, the English made sail for home without waiting to hear what King Henry might wish them to do, subsequently pleading in excuse that no other course had been possible in the circumstances in which they were placed. They were short of victuals, with no prospect of fresh supplies; with a westerly or south-westerly wind they would have been driven into the bay; in a calm they would likewise have been at the mercy of the French; and in either case they had to reckon with the fact that the French ordnance, 'if it be such

as they report, is a thing marvellous'. The plea was not without cogency, but the truth was that experience had taught them the potency of the unfamiliar war-craft which in their ignorance they had foolishly despised. The terror of the Mediterranean had become known in northern seas, and Howard's successor had to confess that 'never were men seen in greater fear than all the masters and mariners be of the galleys, insomuch that in a manner they had as lief go into Purgatory' as into waters where they might again encounter the now dreaded 'spiders' and their demon chief.[1]

And yet there was another side to the picture, and that side considerably more agreeable to English self-esteem. Whatever the emotions which the sight of Prégent's galleys had aroused in her mariners' breasts, England might take comfort from the fact that through the conduct of her gentlemen her honour had been saved spotless in the hour of her defeat. Howard had not died in vain, seeing that in dying he had proved himself a very Bayard of the sea. 'It was a costly sacrifice, but the gallantry of the action retrieved in the world the reputation of England. . . . From this man's example his countrymen jumped to the conviction that nothing was too arduous and no odds on the side of an enemy justified retreat. From this man's daring the world took the measure of English courage generally.'[2] Contemptuous of peril when there was an enemy to be engaged more closely, Howard had set an example of which the service that he loved would feel the inspiration through centuries of conflict; and the sacrifice could not be called useless which had sown the seed that was to germinate again and again wherever English vessels sailed the seven seas. In an obscure skirmish in a Breton roadstead a great tradition had come to birth. That the spirit of Howard has never since been lacking to his country in the hour of her need may be proved from every page of those naval annals which are the abounding garner of its deathless fruits.

[1] Spont, *Letters and Papers relating to the War with France, 1512–1513*, pp. xxx–xli; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 835, 842–3, 845–6; C. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol. iii, pp. 104–10.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xxx.

It was not upon the sea, however, that England meant to strike her main blow, and the energy of Henry's naval preparations was as nothing beside the feverish activity with which he strove to equip for service overseas a force sufficient in size and equipment to efface the stain which Dorset's failure had brought upon English arms. It was no light task, for it was long since England had played a serious part in Continental warfare, and in the interval conditions had greatly changed; the bowmen who in bygone days had humbled the chivalry of France would have a harder task when confronted with the guns which had terrified Italy and driven the army of the League to destruction on the banks of the Ronco. Hard pressed though she was, France was still the first military power in Europe, her troops enured to war and accustomed to victory, and it was no small thing to create out of nothing the machine which should challenge her supremacy. That the thing should be attempted was due to the young King's ambition and to his determination to play a part in the affairs of Europe. That it should be accomplished was due to the organizing genius of his Almoner, Thomas Wolsey, and to the driving power of Wolsey's indomitable will.

All through the spring and summer the news from England was of nothing but martial activities. As early as March the Spanish ambassador described 'the immense force and extraordinary preparations of the King to cross to invade France'.[1] In April, about the time when Howard was cruising off the Breton coast on his last fatal voyage, the news from England was that the ships which were to carry the army were equipped with all that they required, the artillery all on board, the first squadrons of men-at-arms under Talbot embarked, and the rest all ready, so that the departure of the expedition might be looked for at any moment.[2] Then the reports became more specific: 29,000 men had crossed to Calais with all the artillery, munitions, victuals, and apparatus of the army, and the remainder of the force, which was to cross with the King at its head, would bring the army up to 40,000 men.[3] The High Steward would command 16,000 men, who would form the vanguard; the Lord

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, p. 381.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 382.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 388.

Chamberlain would lead the second division of 14,000 men; and the King would be at the head of the last division of 12,000 men. At Calais they had 20,000 foreign mercenaries awaiting their arrival, Burgundians, Germans, and Swiss. Choicer troops in more perfect order had not been seen for years, for the King had made preparations which had never before been equalled. 'There are 80,000 men in all; arms, engines, and money; two millions in gold and fourteen carts laden with silver. All this sounds like a fairy tale, but it is the literal truth. If Louis of France escape this furious tempest, there will indeed be reason to call him a King.'[1]

Antonio Bavarin, the Venetian Consul in London, who penned this report, evidently expected that Louis would succumb to the fury of the storm, and there were many who shared his view. Maximilian had ratified the treaty with England against the French, and had sent a herald to France to declare war upon Louis XII. Many captains, both of horse and of foot, were flocking to his standards, and he was negotiating for Swiss co-operation in his projected attack upon Louis' dominions. His desire was that the Swiss should invade Burgundy simultaneously with his own and Henry's attack upon the northern frontier, and he had undertaken to make good their deficiencies in artillery and mounted troops. It was believed, too, that Ferdinand, with his taste for fishing in troubled waters, would avail himself of the opportunity to cross the Pyrenees. Louis' many enemies felt justified in exulting over the prospects which seemed to be opening before them: they considered it certain that, provided the Swiss would consent to play the part assigned to them, it would be all over with the King of France. Well aware that his one and only hope was in the Scots, that monarch was distressed in body and in mind. His ships were scattered, and no fleet worthy of the name was to be found in any of his harbours. His feeble army was quite powerless to resist the formidable legions which would march at the bidding of his English rival. He was as short of money and of good counsel as of ships and of men. If he were wise, he would go and hide himself in a hole underground rather than

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvii, col. 9; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 105.

await the army which England had marshalled for his chastisement.[1]

Henry reached Calais on the last day of June. Had he been free to think only of English interests, he would perhaps have turned his attention to the neighbouring town of Boulogne, which England had won and lost, and desired eagerly to regain. But he was a member of a Continental coalition, and was bound to consider the wishes of his allies, not only for the purpose of securing their cordial support, but also with a view to furthering the projected alliance between his daughter and the young Archduke Charles, which it was the aim of English policy to bring to completion. Maximilian, who cared nothing for Boulogne, desired that hostilities should be begun on the Flemish frontier, and Henry, to humour him, agreed that the town of Thérouanne should be the first objective of the allied armies. A part of the English force under Talbot was therefore sent forward to begin the siege of that place. Henry himself remained for a time in Calais, where he confirmed his arrangements with the Emperor, whilst awaiting the reinforcements which were promised him by the Regent of the Netherlands. As these troops came in, some were incorporated in the main body, and the rest were sent forward to assist Talbot in the operations upon which he was then engaged.

The town of Thérouanne, which lies to the southward of Saint-Omer on a tributary of the Scheldt, was at this time a place of some importance by reason of its strong defences and of a situation which made it a standing menace to the Austrian possessions in the Low Countries. In John Taylor, Clerk of the Parliaments, who accompanied his sovereign, and has left us a diary of the expedition, a sight of the defences inspired the belief that no age ever saw a place so thoroughly fortified with ramparts and mines;[2] and, after it had fallen, a correspondent explained to the Earl of Devon the formidable nature of the obstacles by which the besiegers had been confronted. 'Verily, my lord,' he wrote, 'it was a stronghold; the ditches on the outside were so deep

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, pp. 385, 389–90; *Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 92.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1060.

that a man walking and looking into them feared for falling down to come nigh the banks'; the banks wooded and bushed with quick-set in every corner; the walls wide and full of bulwarks, mightily fortified on the inside; 'and in certain places sundry deep pits for to have made fumigations, to the intent that men upon the assaulting of the same should have been poisoned and stopped'.[1] Behind these formidable works the commander, Pontrémy, had at his disposal a garrison composed of 600 men-at-arms and 2,500 German mercenaries, to say nothing of the help which might be given him by a martial population fighting in defence of its homes. Some might have supposed that the issue hung in doubt, but not so Antonio Bavarin, who had seen Henry's preparations. Assuredly, he said, the place was strong and well equipped, 'but the English strength is such that Hell itself could not prevail against it'.[2]

Thérouanne justified the implied comparison by showing that it was at all events capable of giving a hot reception to the army which Bavarin believed to be invincible. On the very day when Talbot first pitched his camp before the walls a cannon ball entered the tent where the English leaders sat in council, and cut short the career of Sir Edmund Carew, a faithful adherent of the Tudors, who had been knighted on Bosworth Field, and during the Perkin Warbeck troubles had saved Exeter for the King. When Talbot's men settled down to their siege works, digging the trenches by means of which they would approach the walls, they were troubled by sorties of the garrison so frequent and so lively that it was rather the besiegers than the besieged who seemed to be acting on the defensive. Around the town French light horse were everywhere on the move, intercepting convoys and cutting off stragglers, and reinforcements and supplies from Calais were in constant danger on the road. On 27th June a provision train of a hundred wagons, escorted by five hundred infantry, was intercepted within the Pale, when nearly all the victuals were captured and carried off, whilst the English cavalry which were sent in pursuit were too late to recover the booty. The city, too, remained in touch with its friends, because the English feared to invest it on the south, where investing troops might be surprised between the garrison

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 999–1000.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvii, col. 9.

and a relieving army; and on that side it was always open to the French to introduce as many men and as much food as they pleased. Very little had been done towards the reduction of the besieged city when Henry at last moved forward from Calais to join his advance guard beneath the walls.

The King's march was leisurely and not unadventurous. He had not gone far when he found himself threatened by a large body of the enemy, who obliged him to spend an entire day standing under arms in expectation of an assault. The experience was trying, for the heat was intense, and men in the heavy panoply of war suffered an extremity of discomfort, as they sweltered beneath the torrid July sun. 'This was called the dry wednesday; for the day was wonderful hot, and the king with his army stood in order of battle from six of the clock in the morning till three of the clock in the after noon. And some died from lack of moisture, and generally every man was burned about the mouth with heat of the stomach; for drink lacked, and water was not near.'[1] Anon the fine weather broke, and the army passed from drought to deluge with a suddenness reminiscent of English skies. There was no more talk of lack of moisture then, for the rain was so heavy that the tents were barely able to give protection against the downpour. Conditions underfoot on the ill-made roads were deplorable, and it was no easy matter to move the twelve enormous cannon which had been cast specially at Malines for these operations. As each bore the image of a saint, these great guns were known as the 'Twelve Apostles', although, as a Flemish chronicler remarked, it might have been more appropriate to call them by such names as Satan and Demon, since they spoke with no apostolic voice.[2] Neither did their records remain long unsullied, for on 25th July one of them toppled over into a pond, and soon afterwards another turned over in a narrow road. A hundred workmen were detailed to salve the water-logged monster, but, omitting to set a guard, they were surprised by a party of the enemy, who killed or captured most of them and carried off the gun. It was not until 1st August that the Royal army at last reached a spot where it could join hands with Talbot. The weather was

[1] Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 578.

[2] Brésin, *Chroniques de Flandre et d'Artois*, ed. E. Mannier, p. 81.

then more unfavourable than ever, with a boisterous wind and torrential rain, and the miserable infantry floundered up to their knees in Flemish mud.[1]

High-spirited, courageous, and prodigal,[2] the King of England was popular with all sections of the host; but other qualities were also required for the conduct of military operations, and these qualities Henry and his inexperienced advisers did not possess. The Regent's envoys, who were present in the camp, explained to their mistress that English enthusiasm was offset by English indiscipline; and Henry, conscious of his own defects, recognized that it would be to his advantage, if he could profit by the presence and counsel of his veteran ally, the Emperor. Maximilian had long been expected in the camp, but was detained by other interests, and it was not until 10th August that he approached the theatre of war, to meet Henry at Aire. Two days later, after Henry in the interval had received the defiance of the Scottish herald, the Emperor rode over to the English camp and examined the situation. He was not favourably impressed, and was disposed to regret that the siege had ever been undertaken. However, it was too late to withdraw from an operation which had been carried so far, and there was nothing for it but to press on with the siege works and make the investment more strict. That was accordingly done, and whereas at first the French were able to throw reinforcements into the beleaguered city, by the middle of August the conditions had entirely changed, and Thérouanne was then so closely environed with troops, trenches, and wagons 'that no succour could enter, either of men or of victuals'.[3]

The story which follows may be understood more easily, if we keep in mind the main geographical features of the area in which Henry's troops were about to operate. To the southward of Thérouanne lay a stretch of undulating ground, bordered on the north by the valley of the Lys, and intersected at no great distance from the valley by another and

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 1057–9; Busch, 'Englands Kriege', *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, 1910, pp. 17–25.

[2] 'Plus que trop grand despensier d'argent', as a Flemish chronicler emphatically expressed it; Brésin, *Chroniques*, p. 83.

[3] Busch, 'Englands Kriege', pp. 20–5; *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, pp. 389–90.

smaller valley, through which the Laquette brook flowed on its way to join the main stream. On the rising ground between the Lys and the Laquette stood Guinegate, and southwards of Guinegate, on the edge of the rising ground beyond the Laquette, stood the village of Bomy. The small town of Blangy lay some eighteen or twenty miles farther to the south.[1] The first English troops to cross the river, a party of horse and foot a few thousand strong, went over the Lys on 13th August and took up a position near Guinegate, to block the way of a relief train which was expected to come up from Blangy, where French forces were reported to be assembling. But this precaution did not satisfy Maximilian, who believed that Thérouanne could never be reduced otherwise than by complete investment; and two days later, at his urgent instance, it was decided that Henry should lead the main English body over the river, leaving Shrewsbury and Herbert to carry on the siege in their original positions on the northern side of the town. The decision, once taken, was acted upon with promptness, and in the morning of the 16th the cavalry, the infantry, the artillery, and the supply and munition wagons went over by five bridges which had been thrown across the river during the preceding night. Upon the news that a French force had been seen in movement beyond Bomy Henry at once disposed his army in battle order on the high ground near Guinegate, with his cavalry in advance of his infantry, his German mercenaries on the left, and his guns so posted as to command the valley of the Laquette.

The report of an impending French movement was correct: encouraged by the ineffectiveness of the English siege operations to believe that they could easily run the blockade, Louis' generals had decided to undertake a considerable operation for the purpose of reinforcing the garrison of Thérouanne and replenishing its supplies. With this end in view a large body of cavalry had been assembled at Blangy; a part was to act as an escort to the provision train, which would approach Thérouanne on the south by way of Bomy and Guinegate, whilst the rest would march by the other bank to distract the attention of the besiegers, whose whole force was believed to be still posted to the north of the town.

[1] Busch, 'Englands Kriege', p. 27.

Chance directed that the movement should be timed to begin at the very moment of Henry's passage of the Lys, and in the night of 15th August, in which the English were spanning the river with their bridges, the French cavalry, pack-horses, and supply carts were being marshalled in the base at Blangy. On the left bank all went well: the feint attack diverted the attention of Shrewsbury without involving the attackers in much loss, whilst Herbert's troops were similarly occupied by a sortie from Thérouanne. On the other bank, however, where serious resistance had not been expected, the French plan was completely upset by the unlooked-for presence of the English in force at Guinegate.

About two o'clock in the morning of 16th August the provision train and its escort of six or eight thousand horse set out from Blangy upon its march. For a long time the undulating ground hid Guinegate from the view of the French, and it was not until their skirmishers were engaged and driven back by heavy cavalry near Bomy that they began to suspect that the enemy were present in force on the right bank of the river. That suspicion became a certainty when about midday they came out over the crest of the hill at Bomy and saw the widely extended ranks of the English army, as it stood drawn up in battle order on the slope beyond the Laquette. They did not, however, on that account desist from their advance, but, forming in three divisions, moved down the hillside into the Laquette valley. When the first division reached the brook, it found itself within range of Henry's guns, and perceived that it was also in some danger of being enveloped by his advancing troops. It halted, waited for a moment in indecision, and then began to recoil. Orderly at first, the retrograde movement became a flight when the English heavy cavalry charged over the Laquette in pursuit and drove back the fleeing Frenchmen in wild confusion upon their own rear ranks. The whole French force was thus thrown into disorder, and before it could be rallied, the English cavalry were upon it, whilst from behind hedges and trees parties of mounted archers, who had crept forward unperceived, began to rain their deadly missiles upon its flank. Seldom has there been a shorter fight, if that could be called a fight which upon one side was no more than the flight of an unresisting mass.

Only here and there did an individual horseman strike a blow for honour. Bayard, with a few companions beside him, turned at bay on a bridge spanning one of the streams by which that region is watered, and sent word to the leaders that he would endeavour to hold up the pursuit while they rallied their men; but it was hopeless to think of rallying men so far gone in panic that they had thrown away their arms; and as the English were able to cross the stream lower down and cut him off, his gesture of defiance resulted merely in his own capture.

The famous Chevalier was in good company, for the long list of prisoners contained many a distinguished name. Amongst the captured were the young Duke of Longueville, a cousin of the King, the Count of Dunois, the Vice-Admiral of France, and Count Galeazzo di San Severino, Master of the Horse. At one time it had seemed probable that La Palice, who had been wounded and taken, would share the same fate; but he had managed to escape or had been rescued during the *mêlée*. Nine or ten standards remained in the hands of the victors, who also became masters of the whole train of pack animals and provision carts destined for Thérouanne. Well pleased with the completeness of his triumph in the engagement in which he had fleshed his sword, Henry behaved charmingly to his captives. To one noble prisoner he gave a habit of cloth of gold, and, when dinner was served, invited him to sit down at the Royal table. 'Sire,' demurred the Frenchman, 'I could not do that.' 'But you are my prisoner', said the King, 'and you must.' Nor was the recipient of these favours the only captive to benefit by the Royal generosity: every Frenchman who could offer a ransom of 4,000 ducats was ordered to be released on payment of 2,000, Henry undertaking to make good the deficiency out of his own pocket; and every common soldier taken with twenty *écus* in his pocket was permitted to purchase his freedom with the contents of his purse.[1]

[1] 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 354–7; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xvii, col. 24; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 977; Busch, 'Englands Kriege im Jahre 1513: Guinegate und Flodden', in *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, 1910, pp. 25–9, to whose account I am specially indebted.

Such was the battle of Guinegate, which came to be known as 'the Battle of the Spurs', from the fact that the French had been quicker to use the instruments which goaded their horses to flight than the weapons which might have carried themselves to victory. The conduct of Louis' troops seemed to be strangely at variance with the traditions of reckless valour which upon many a stricken field had brought fame and victory to a *gendarmerie* that had seldom acknowledged defeat. Bayard's biographer explained the occurrence in the following words. 'One thing must be clearly understood,' he wrote, 'a thing known to few, so that the French gentlemen have been criticized most unjustly for this day's work. It is this: the French men-at-arms were all instructed by their captains that, the operation being directed solely to provisioning Thérouanne, an engagement was to be avoided; that they were to retire if the enemy should be encountered in force; and that, if need be, they were to retire rapidly, for no risk was to be run.' In accordance with these orders the French trumpets had sounded the retreat when a large body of English foot had been seen advancing with the evident intention of hemming the French in; at sound of the trumpets the men-at-arms, mindful of orders, had retreated rapidly; being pursued, they had quickened their pace from a trot to a gallop; and by the time they reached their main body the pace had become so hot that they could not then be restrained.[1] Explanations of defeat provoke incredulity, and the 'Loyal Serviteur's' apology may fail to carry conviction; but that some such orders as he alleges were given is rendered inherently probable by the fact that the revictualling of Thérouanne was not an operation in which any sane leader would have risked the last troops whom France could place between herself and her invaders.

Leaving Thérouanne to its fate, the beaten army retired towards the Somme and took up a position at Ancre, where it would be best placed to guard the frontier, and whither Francis of Angoulême was sent in haste, to prevent a repetition of misfortunes which were attributed to the jealousies and dissensions of the leaders. Closely besieged, and cut off from all hope of succour, the beleaguered garrison held on for a few days longer, and then on 21st August proposed a

[1] 'Loyal Serviteur', ed. J. Roman, pp. 355–6.

parley with a view to negotiating terms of surrender. Doubtful of their ability to take the place by assault, and reluctant to waste more time over it, the besiegers were ready to agree to favourable terms, and on the morning of the 23rd a treaty of capitulation was settled. At noon on the same day the garrison marched out, bearing their arms, and preceded by their colours and their baggage. Such townsmen as chose to do so went with them, taking their goods and chattels; the rest were to swear an oath of allegiance to King Henry, who sent Talbot to protect his new subjects from pillage at the hands of his troops. Next day the King and the Emperor entered in state, and a solemn *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral. The victory was a barren one, so far as Henry was concerned, for the Emperor demanded that the place should be made harmless, and the King, who could not afford to quarrel with Austria, was compelled reluctantly to permit the demolition of the fortifications which it had cost him so much to overcome.[1]

After the fall of Thérouanne the Emperor urged upon his English ally the desirability of an attack upon Tournai. News had reached the camp that the Swiss had entered Burgundy and were preparing to invest Dijon, where La Trémoille would be unable to hold out for long; and when Dijon had fallen, the road to Paris would lie open before the Swiss armies. In truth, however, Maximilian's strategy was based, not so much upon a possible junction with another invading army, as upon the desirability of using Henry's forces to reduce a place of which Austria might hope to secure the custody, if England should find that she could not hold it. Henry had little interest in the reduction of Tournai, but allowed himself to be persuaded that its capture would be a profitable operation, and on 5th September the English army set out upon its march.

Touching as they did the frontiers of Hainault upon one side, those of Flanders upon another, and those of Artois upon a third, the city of Tournai and its dependent territory formed a small enclave in the midst of alien lands. Perhaps on that account its people were the more thoroughly French in sentiment; they had always cherished the connexion with

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 984–5; *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, pp. 390–1; Busch, 'Englands Kriege', pp. 30–2.

France, even when, as in the dark days of the Hundred Years' War, the maintenance of the relation had involved danger and sacrifice; and that 'Tournai oncques n'avoit tourné' was the proud boast of its loyal population. As an industrial centre, where tapestry, linen, and cloth were manufactured, and an active trade was carried on with the chief markets of France and the Low Countries, Tournai had stood high during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and albeit in the beginning of the sixteenth century it had passed the meridian of its mercantile greatness, the city was yet extensive, populous, and opulent. Wide ditches surrounded its double walls; powerful bastions flanked its seven gates; and many high towers added to the strength of its defensive works. There was, however, one respect in which the city was at a disadvantage in the matter of defence, more especially since the advent of efficient siege guns: the circuit of its walls was in large part commanded by adjacent higher ground.

The people of Tournai had not been greatly alarmed by the coming of the English, from whom they apprehended no special danger, and in their sturdy independence they had refused the offers of help which had been made to them by Louis XII. The dogs of war being loosed upon the frontier, however, common sense suggested a few precautions, and these were taken while the English were occupied at Thérouanne. The fortifications were repaired; tramps and beggars were expelled; wine and provisions were laid in; and trees which might obstruct gun-fire were felled. When in the beginning of September the townspeople saw reason to apprehend an English attack, further and more drastic defensive measures were adopted: the suburbs were then destroyed by fire, houses near the gates were pulled down, and provision was made for sheltering the people of the country districts, whom an invader would drive from their homes.

The English marched from Thérouanne on 5th September, and on the 10th pitched their camp under the walls of Tournai. On the 11th Henry was received in Lille by Maximilian and his daughter, the Regent, and next day rejoined his troops, to supervise the conduct of the siege. Fortune smiled upon him from the first in his new enterprise. The

weather, after being exceptionally wet, became consistently fine. His march was unmolested. His troops won a signal success in the first operation of the siege, when a vigorous sortie of the townspeople was repelled with heavy loss. And then came news from England of a great victory over the Scots, news the more welcome in that 'that enterprise was one of the chief things upon which the French relied for assistance'.[1] If the King's luck was in, Tournai was not destined to put it out. The city was completely invested, and from the neighbouring eminences the 'Apostles' hurled destruction upon its walls. In a few days the walls were breached, and when Lord Lisle captured and held a tower, the way was open for an assault. Tournai acknowledged defeat, and on 21st September authorized its magistrates to arrange a capitulation on terms. The offer provoked disagreement in the allied camp, where the Imperialists claimed the city, because it stood within the Austrian territories, and Henry also claimed it, because it belonged to the French Crown, which he said was his. Henry standing firm, his right to accept a surrender was conceded by the Emperor, and after the English sovereign had received the keys, his troops took possession of the city. Tournai agreed to pay to Henry the annual tribute which it had been accustomed to pay to the King of France, together with a war indemnity of 50,000 *écus* and an extraordinary yearly *aide* during a period of ten years. On Sunday, 25th September, Henry made a solemn entry into the city within whose gates no hostile sovereign had set foot for more than three hundred years.[2]

It was a rich prize, and the English might be excused some self-laudation for the speed with which they had possessed themselves of it. 'Yesterday', wrote Brian Tuke, the Clerk of the Signet, from the camp, 'this opulent, strong, fair, and extensive city of Tournai surrendered. . . . We have now the city of Terouenne, which was called "the King's Treasury", and Tournai, on whose walls was inscribed "La pucelle

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, p. 402.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 392–7, 400–2, 407–8, 411–12; A. Hocquet, *Tournai et l'occupation anglaise*, pp. 7–20, and 'Tournai et le Tournaisis au XVI^e siècle', in *Mémoires* of the Académie Royale de Belgique, Series II, vol. i, pp. 258–67; Busch, 'Englands Kriege', *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, 1910, pp. 36–40.

sans reproche", that is, "the unsullied maiden". "The King's Treasury" is burned, and this "maiden" hath lost her maidenhood.'[1]

Whilst the 'Apostles' were thundering at Tournai, a whirlwind from the Swiss mountains had swept over the Duchy of Burgundy. Opinion in the Cantons had been hardening against France throughout Louis' reign, and after Novara the Swiss purged their councils of French pensioners and adherents, and in the beginning of August resolved to accept the Emperor's proposals for a joint invasion of France. The decision was welcomed by the people, and 10,000 volunteers joined themselves to the army of 16,000 men officially sanctioned by the Diet. Under the arrangement with the Emperor that army was to be further reinforced by 1,000 cavalry under the Duke of Würtemberg and by an artillery complement of twenty guns. At the end of August the army was ready to take the field, and, marching by Besançon, descended upon Burgundy. Early in September its advance guard appeared before the walls of Dijon, the provincial capital. La Trémoille, the Governor, had done what he could to put the city into a state of defence, but his position was hopeless from the first, for his defences were antiquated and inadequate, his garrison was small, his treasure chest was empty, the loyalty of his province was doubtful, and the English menace in Flanders deprived him of the hope of relief. He held out as long as he dared, but on 13th September, when his walls were breached and Dijon lay at the mercy of the besiegers, he submitted to peace terms of their dictation. Louis XII was to renounce his claim to Milan and Asti; any Milanese citadels still held by his troops were to be surrendered; all Papal places occupied by him were to be restored; there was to be a general amnesty for Burgundians who had taken sides against France; Louis was to pay indemnities of 400,000 *écus* to the Swiss and 8,000 *écus* to the Duke of Würtemberg; he was to forswear all unauthorized recruiting in Switzerland; and, finally, the infraction of any single article of the treaty was to void the whole.[2] As soon as these terms were agreed to by La Trémoille, the

[1] *Calendars of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, pp. 408; *Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 135.

[2] Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, p. 175.

Swiss, taking a few hostages with them, returned to their mountains.

No sooner were they safely out of the way than Louis announced his repudiation of a bargain which had been made without his authority. The folly of the Swiss leaders was then patent to all the world. Not only had they taken upon themselves to negotiate when explicitly instructed to make no bargain without the sanction of the home Government, but they had not even taken the precaution of awaiting the King's ratification of a treaty which purported to inflict upon him conditions both onerous and humiliating. Their conduct was the more inexplicable in that all the cards had been in their hands. That they should retreat from Dijon when the town must inevitably have fallen, exposing the defenceless kingdom in its rear, has been ascribed variously to their credulity, to their venality, or to their dissatisfaction with their Imperialist comrades in arms. Whatever the cause, they had permitted France to extricate herself cheaply, if none too honourably, from a position of exceptional danger. The harm was done, and could not be undone; it was too late in the season to arm for a war of revenge; and it only remained to consider how far outraged dignity might be soothed by the blood or the suffering of the Frenchmen who had been left in Swiss hands as hostages. That hostages should be put to death was becoming unusual, but it was not yet an unthinkable infraction of the comity of nations, and the unfortunate captives had to reckon with the temper of a greedy and violent people, fuming under a sense of trickery and deceit. The hostages were five in number, and included two nobles, of whom one was a nephew of La Trémoille and the other was the Bailli of Dijon, and three *bourgeois*, who were members of the Dijon municipality. Humbert de Villeneuve, First President of the local Parlement, was sent after them, to gain time and, if it might be possible, to assuage Swiss wrath. The temper of the Swiss was revealed when he, too, was seized and put in gaol. The Swiss then met to settle the fate of the captives, and it was decided that the nobles should be beheaded and the *bourgeois* hanged. By the flight of the Bailli of Dijon, who managed to escape from prison, his less fortunate companions were placed in yet greater jeopardy; transferred to a dungeon, and ironed on

hands, feet, and waists, they were told almost daily to prepare for death. Meanwhile in Dijon the friends and relatives of the three *bourgeois* were moving heaven and earth to secure payment of the ransom which would set the prisoners free. They began with the City Fathers, who declared that the whole business was an affair of State outside their cognizance, and advised the petitioners to pay the ransom out of their own pockets and then appeal to the King for reimbursement. An envoy was then sent to Court, to implore aid from Louis XII, who consented to provide money for the ransom, but stipulated that his part in the matter should not be divulged. Months had now passed; time had wrought its changes; and when, to obtain an audience of the King, the envoy followed him to Abbeville, he found him busy in receiving a Princess whom the envoy judged to be 'as lovely a lady as ever Dame Nature made'.[1] The Princess was Mary Tudor, and it will not be amiss, if we take our place by the envoy's side, to catch a glimpse of the pleasing vision which had entranced his eyes; but before we do so, it will be well to learn why the King of France should be welcoming to his Court the sister of a sovereign who so lately had been his sworn foe.[2]

[1] Garnier, *Correspondance de la Mairie de Dijon*, vol. i, p. 263.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. cvii–cxiv; Oechsli, *History of Switzerland*, pp. 47–9; Lavisse, *Histoire de France*, vol. v, part i, pp. 113–14.

XXVIII

MARY TUDOR

In the winter of 1513 the fortunes of France, erstwhile so brilliant, had fallen strangely low; driven from Italy, hardly freed from an irruption of the Swiss, defeated ignominiously at Guinegate, stricken again in the person of her ally at Flodden and by that disaster left well-nigh bereft of friends, she seemed to lie prostrate before the ring of enemies who hemmed her in. Her best, if not her only, hope of escaping further indignities rested, not upon that which she herself could do, but upon that which her enemies might leave undone; not by her own exertions, but by their want of energy or cohesion, might she avoid the perils by which she was threatened. Her plight would have become serious indeed, had Maximilian's advice been heeded when after the reduction of Tournai he pressed for a vigorous prosecution of the war. Henry, however, wanted a respite from hostilities. He had done enough for honour; it was late in the season, and he had no taste for a winter campaign; he was beginning to feel the strain of keeping so large an army in the field; and his presence was required at home, where the situation in Scotland called for grave decisions. But notwithstanding that he turned a deaf ear to the Emperor's solicitations, he did not as yet harbour any thought of retiring from the contest. On the contrary, he meant to renew the attack upon France in the following spring, and to renew it with increased vigour. Leaving Tournai on 13th October he accompanied the Emperor and the Regent of the Netherlands to Lille, and there two days later signed an agreement for the future conduct of the war; it was also arranged that another meeting should take place at Calais in the spring, when the marriage between the Archduke Charles and the King of England's sister would be celebrated. On the 17th another treaty against France received the signatures of Henry, of Maximilian, and of the representatives of Ferdinand of Aragon. Ferdinand undertook to co-operate in the next campaign, pledging himself to invade Aquitaine or Guyenne with an army of a specified size and to give up his conquests to his English ally, who would supply a monthly

contribution of 20,000 crowns and invade France simultaneously on her northern frontiers; and the treaty contained further promises by the two Kings to equip fleets for service at sea not later than the following spring. These arrangements made, Henry left Lille for Ypres, on 19th October was at Calais, and on the 21st sailed for home.[1]

Strange as were many of Ferdinand's proceedings in the sphere of diplomacy, the new bargain with Henry may be said to possess peculiarities all its own, for only a short time had elapsed since the negotiation of the treaty of Orthez, in which Ferdinand had betrayed the allies whom he now pledged himself to support and had bound himself to the power which he now pledged himself to assail. In this as in all other conjunctures of his varied career the crafty old King regulated his policy upon a close estimate of probabilities and a nice calculation of attainable benefit. That for which he was really striving was to keep his neighbours at variance and to profit by their quarrels. He wanted to preserve his alliance with England and to maintain the English pressure upon France just so far as would make Spanish offers valuable in the eyes of Louis XII. It was a ticklish business, for the pressure must be neither so strong as to abase France unduly nor so weak as to make her indifferent to offers of assistance. As presently appeared by his actions, his intention was to wait until English pressure should have made Louis amenable, and then to intervene with an offer of peace based upon a marriage between his grandson, the Infante Ferdinand, and Louis' younger daughter, Renée, in whom Louis' Italian claims were to be vested. He sent an ambassador, Quintana, to the French Court, who succeeded in inducing Louis to offer that which Ferdinand desired. Ferdinand hoped for the concurrence of the Emperor, but was prepared to dispense with it, if that monarch should prove unaccommodating. Quintana was instructed to acquaint Maximilian with the secret of the new proposals and to represent to him the advantages of acceptance and the dangers of refusal. The marriage would secure Navarre to Prince Charles, and by providing the Infante Ferdinand with a dominion in Italy would make it unnecessary to partition the Austrian in-

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1052 (and cf. pp. 1104 and 1169); Busch, 'Englands Kriege', *Historische Vierteljahrschrift*, 1910, pp. 41–2.

heritance in Germany. These were gains greater by far than any to be hoped for from the most successful war on France; nor should Maximilian forget that he could prosecute such a war only with the help of the English, who had already demonstrated their untrustworthiness.[1]

Maximilian confided the secret to his daughter, requesting her advice, and that confident young woman, who always knew her own mind, condemned the project with no uncertain voice. The French, she said, were evidently playing for time, their aim being to deceive the members of the coalition into suspending their military preparations in expectation of a settlement. Even if favourable terms were to be offered, could the French be trusted to observe them? Would they not revive their pretensions in a convenient season? And would not the shame of the House of Austria be greater than before, if it were to take back to-day and lose again to-morrow? The position of the Emperor differed from that of his allies. 'Between France and Spain there are great mountains; between France and England lies the sea; but between us and France there is no barrier, and the French cherish towards our House a great and inveterate hatred.' It was all very well for the Catholic King to be inclined to peace, for he would get what he wanted, but the Emperor and King Henry would not. Now or never was the time to get the better of the common enemy. If by Ferdinand's advice the opportunity should be neglected, very special precautions ought to be enforced. 'I am sure that hitherto the King of England has never thought of making an appointment with France; but if he perceive or suspect that we wish to change any conclusion that has been treated with him, it will make him think that which he has never thought. The danger is that he can always make a good appointment, and, if he wishes to make it alone, a better than we can make for him. In separating him from us it is to be feared that we could not so easily recover him at need.'[2]

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 1110–11; Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, pp. 178–9; Busch, 'Englands Kriege', pp. 42–6.

[2] Le Glay, *Correspondance de Maximilien et de Marguerite d'Autriche*, vol. ii, pp. 221–4, and *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, pp. 564–7, 570; *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 1154–5.

It was perhaps natural that Margaret should regard Ferdinand's proposals with suspicion, but, as subsequent events were to show, she was wrong in supposing that the House of Austria would be injured by the plan in which Maximilian was invited to acquiesce. It has been truly said of that plan that it was of a nature to change the whole political state of Europe, for if the Infante could have been indemnified in Italy, the Austrian principalities need not have been divided, and if Charles V had possessed a territorial status in Germany, the empire of the world might have been consolidated in the hands of himself and his heirs.[1] But if she was wrong about the Infante, Margaret was unquestionably right when she cautioned her father against the danger of forfeiting Henry VIII's confidence. Though Henry had gone home with the avowed intention of renewing the war in the coming year, he had not carried with him any warm regard for his allies; he complained, not without reason, that they left him to shoulder the whole burden of the war, and grumbled that, whilst he had 40,000 men under arms in England and 10,000 at sea, he was also expected to support the entire force in Flanders, consisting of 100,000 men more.[2] His discontent grew into feelings of a fiercer kind when he began to suspect his allies, not merely of apathy and neglect, but of ingratitude and wilful deceit. The proposed union between Charles and Mary was hanging fire, because Maximilian was drawn towards another alliance, which would consolidate Austrian power in Germany, and this disposition in the Austrians to reject his sister's hand Henry resented as an affront to himself.[3] Bad as it was, the conduct of the Emperor was pardonable when compared with the behaviour of the Catholic King. Henry had got wind of Quintana's mission, and knew that Ferdinand, who had already played him false at Orthez, was now contemplating a more egregious piece of treachery in the shape of a peace with France, to which Maximilian might be admitted, but in which the interests of England would not be considered. Henry was very bitter, and swore that he had been betrayed: Ferdinand had instigated him to go to war; he had gone to war, and at a huge cost; the war had been successful, Thérouanne and

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. lxxxv–lxxxvi.
[2] *Ibid., Milanese*, vol. i, p. 400. [3] *Ibid., Spanish*, vol. ii, pp. lxxiv–lxxxiv.

Tournai being captured, France reduced to extremities, and the pride of Scotland humbled; and then, when the enemy had been beaten to their knees, Ferdinand calmly proposed an accommodation.[1] So be it! He would show his allies that this was a game at which he, too, could play. If the alliance of England was not good enough for Ferdinand, it might be offered to France, where it would be esteemed at its proper worth. If the hand of the King of England's sister was despised by Austria, it might be offered to Louis XII, who had just lost his Queen.[2] A separate peace with Louis would effectually defeat Ferdinand's perfidious plans. And of such a peace Louis would know the value. Whereas Ferdinand had involved him in war and left him to bear its cost, from Louis he might expect the payment of substantial pensions and indemnities. A profitable peace would be better than a costly war waged for the benefit of perfidious allies.

There were not wanting those who would labour to encourage Henry in these dispositions. The pecuniary advantages of an accommodation with France were not unappreciated in the King's *entourage*. The stroke of policy which France would achieve by an *entente* with England commended itself to the judgement of the French nobles who had been taken at Guinegate and were detained in an honourable captivity in Henry's Court. Chief among these was the Duke of Longueville, a member of the House of Orleans and a favourite with its Royal head. Possessed of the easy manners and social address of his race, the Duke had become popular in the society of the English capital, and had contrived to ingratiate himself with the King and his ministers. His influence with both sovereigns was exerted in the cause of peace, and his position made him an excellent vehicle for the secret communications by which the hoped-for accommodation could best be brought about.

To these personal influences was added diplomatic pressure of no inconsiderable weight. Ferdinand's proposal for establishing the Infante in Milan, which excited anger in the mind of the English King, had aroused a feeling of intense alarm in the mind of the new Pope, who instantly cast about

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1186.
[2] She died on 9th January, 1514.

for a means by which the project might be defeated. Leo X had already evinced a desire to terminate the quarrel with France which he had inherited from his predecessor, and with that pacific end in view had accepted the submission of Cardinals Carvajal and San Severino, who upon their formal repudiation of the Pisa Council had been reinstated in their offices and dignities despite Spanish and Imperial opposition. The Pope carried the reconciliation through because he knew it to be an essential preliminary to the re-establishment of friendly relations with France, and in the summer of 1513, after the failure of the Franco-Venetian campaign in the Milanese, he gave a further proof of his good will by offering to mediate between Henry VIII and Louis XII. In the ecclesiastical sphere his policy soon bore fruit: encouraged by the devout Queen, and influenced by the existence of a large body of opinion in France which had always lamented the open breach with the Holy See, Louis braced himself to make the sacrifice of pride which the circumstances demanded, and in October 1513 Claude de Seyssel, his representative in Rome, accepted a declaration by which the French King signified his submission to the Lateran Council. The event increased Leo's tendency to incline towards France, and his desire to help her was further strengthened when he found that the cession of her Italian claims might result from her isolation. No development could be more injurious to the interests of the Papacy, as he understood them. As Guicciardini expressed it, he 'was still of the same mind that it would be most detrimental to the general interest that the Duchy of Milan should come into the power of the Emperor and the Catholic King, and not less injurious that it should be recovered by the King of France. It was thus very difficult for him to know how to proceed, or how to balance matters so that the means which promoted one end did not prejudice the other. For of the two dangers one arose from the depression and nervousness of the King of France, the other from his exaltation and security.'[1] If the depression of the King of France were to lead to a cession of his Italian claims, Leo might, and most probably would, be confronted by an incalculable evil, namely, the unchallenged supremacy of one foreign power

[1] Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, ed. Gherardi, vol. iii, p. 90.

in Italy. Stirred to unwonted activity by the prospect, he dispatched a special ambassador to expostulate with Louis and to caution him against the danger of aggrandizing a dangerous enemy; and at the same time he took measures to restrain the Swiss from any action which might intensify Louis' difficulties. Nor did he stop there. Knowing that it was chiefly through fear of England that Louis was tempted to seek Spanish support, he set himself to bring about a reconciliation between Louis and Henry VIII, and in May 1514 one of his ablest agents left for the French and English Courts to search for a basis upon which the contending sovereigns might be brought together.[1]

The views of the French Government in the spring of 1514 are explained at length in a dispatch of Acciajuoli, who was entrusted with the care of Medicean interests in France. When Acciajuoli heard of the projected marriage between the Infante and Princess Renée, he asked for an interview with the King, and spoke to him in plain terms. 'The Pope', he told him, 'has heard of the project, and is by no means pleased with it. He would not disapprove of it, if it were suggested as a basis for a general peace; but he thinks that it will merely lead to an increase of troubles. For when this marriage shall have taken place and Milan shall have been handed over to the Archduke's brother, then, as Your Majesty must allow, the Emperor and the King of Spain will be able to dispose of it as they please; Spain, Flanders, Austria, the Empire, Naples, and Genoa are already in their hands; if Madame Claude were to die, they would get Brittany as well; and then they would become so powerful that you, who are now a sovereign of unequalled power, would be reduced to the second rank, and would scarcely be able to defend your own kingdom, if they should choose to attack you. Your Majesty should consider what you are doing, and should hesitate to incur so extreme a danger. You should think, too, of the consequences to Italian liberty and to the safety of the Church: Italy, of whose liberty you have always been the defender, would be left at the mercy of the Germans; the Church would be left at the mercy of

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, p. 381; Guicciardini, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–92; Pastor, *History of the Papacy*, Eng. trans., vol. vii, pp. 54–71, 93–8.

the Emperor; and such results could not be deemed honourable to Your Majesty or worthy of the French Crown. If your object be to rid yourself of Italian worries, then I say that His Holiness and we other Italians will have to think of ourselves. If your object be to escape the pressure of present dangers, then I say that you are preparing the way for perils greater still, for who knows better than you, Sire, how far from safe it is to repose confidence in the Emperor and the Catholic King? It is they with their perfidies who have brought the present dangers upon you; and if you augment their power and repute, they will be more dangerous than before. You should consider the matter well, and request the Pope to bring about some arrangement with England and the Swiss. The Pope is reluctant to abandon your cause, and is ready to do all in his power to promote your safety.'

Louis replied that up to that point he had done nothing but make a truce; but he added that he must find friends where he could. What more, he asked, could he do with the Pope, who wished him to give up his claim to Milan, proposed that he should abandon Guyenne and Normandy to the English, and had worked to prevent his making an arrangement with the Swiss? He had made all sorts of offers to the Pope, but could get nothing out of him. He must take some decision, for he had great expenses, and the campaigning season was at hand.

Acciajuoli then asked him whether it would satisfy him, if the Pope were to bring about an agreement with the Swiss and relieve him of that danger, repeating his assurance that His Holiness was minded to do whatever he could for him, if he would but avoid the line of action which he contemplated. 'I cannot be satisfied, until I have my Duchy,' replied Louis; 'and if I see that I cannot get it, I shall do the best I can. If I can win over the Pope and the Swiss and recover my Duchy with their help, then not for another ten years will I so much as breathe a word about my daughter's marriage, and the Pope may count upon me to the full. Discuss the matter with my Council to-morrow, and decide what is to be done, for I want to get some course of action settled, and am resolved that I will not be left isolated any longer.'

In the course of a long discussion with the Council Acciajuoli was told that things could not go on as they were, for it was essential that the King should free himself from danger and expense. Letters from Switzerland were produced for the ambassador's inspection, in which it was alleged that the Pope was intriguing against France, and he was given to understand that the danger of the proposed marriage being carried through was real. The marriage was not definitely settled, however, and it might be possible to induce the King to overlook past injuries and once again to place his trust in the Pope. With the Swiss Louis was ready to come to terms on the basis of an immediate payment of half the Dijon indemnity and an undertaking for the future liquidation of the balance, which he could not immediately find. In the matter of England, he would entertain no terms which involved any concession: on the contrary, he was minded rather to recover Tournai.

'Things therefore stand thus,' commented the ambassador. 'The intention of the King and his advisers, as revealed by their language, is undoubtedly to carry through the marriage, unless in the meantime His Holiness should make some definite proposal; and I am certain that they are ready to plunge down the precipice and thrust us aside. The Pope can do nothing in the matter unless he is prepared to help the Most Christian King and put him in the way of recovering Milan. If there were a way by which Milan might be left in the hands of the present Duke, it would be highly desirable to keep all Ultramontanes away from it. But if it be necessary to come down either on the Swiss side of the fence or on the French side, then it will be well to consider which power is likely to prove the less dangerous and more accommodating neighbour. The French, as all will agree, are as little covetous of other people's possessions as any power in the world; they will keep the Venetians in order, and act as a buffer against Swiss violence; and, if ever they themselves should show signs of kicking over the traces, they can be taught reason by Swiss and Italian swords. His Holiness may therefore think it wise to adopt this alternative in preference to the other. If so, the Swiss must be induced to concur. They must be persuaded that their interests are vitally concerned in the frustration of Ferdinand's project,

and they must be exhorted to be patient about their 200,000 *écus*. If he can secure their co-operation or even induce them to stand aside, the Pope may undoubtedly obtain from the French a binding undertaking that the projected marriage scheme shall be abandoned. To keep the Swiss quiet is the great thing, but the hands of the French would be more free, and they could better serve as the instruments of Papal designs, if by a truce or peace the English could also be kept quiet for two or three years.

'It has occurred to me to make use of M. d'Angoulême in this affair, and I have spent a long time with him, pointing out the dangers, and explaining that he would be the chief sufferer, having regard to the position for which God intends him. With suitable arguments I have convinced him that the affair should not be allowed to go on. His views are sound, and he has done some good. I am specially commissioned by him to tell His Holiness that his one desire is to do him service, and that, if ever he attain the station to which he may peradventure be called, he will give an unequivocal manifestation of his respect for and devotion to Holy Church. The message deserves a friendly acknowledgement, for in view alike of his spirit and qualities and of his prospects it will be well to win him betimes; and if, as I suppose, it be intended to grant a dispensation for his marriage with Madame Claude, it will be tactful, not merely to grant it, but to accompany it with some rather special mark of favour.'[1]

Six weeks later the Pope received similar advice from another agent, who knew the French equally well, and upon whose judgement he could as firmly rely. Pandolfini told him that the King of France, his character being what it was, would grow weary of all the anxiety and danger, tire of the great and continual expense, and get bored by the complaints of a people oppressed by taxation and harassed by soldiers; and then it would be no matter for surprise, if fear and despair were to throw him back upon other alliances and drive him to some precipitate and inconsiderate action designed to quench the flame and procure himself a respite from worry. The Pope would do well to take some action,

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 601–6.

and the best thing he could do, if he were able to influence them, would be to get something settled with the Swiss or with the English or with both.[1]

About the same time the Pope's inclination towards the French was remarked in Rome, where it was understood that he felt himself to have been betrayed by Spain, and where it was noticed that the French ambassador, to whom he used to give the cold shoulder, was constantly with him, and was gladly heard. It was reported there also that the King of England in letters written in his own hand had complained vehemently of the conduct of the Spaniards in making a truce with France, and had expressed his eagerness to act in accordance with His Holiness' wishes.[2] Thus everything pointed to the course which the Florentine envoys advocated, and the Pope saw that an opportunity presented itself for exerting his authority in the cause of peace.

Strange rumours already filled the air, and shrewd observers foresaw the possibility of a new orientation of French policy based upon a marriage between the French sovereign and the King of England's sister. As early as April Gattinara warned Margaret of a common belief that 'the old gallant would marry the young girl'; and Pandolfini, estimating the chances of a marriage between Renée and the Infante, alluded to a report that Louis himself was in treaty for another marriage alliance. In a burst of confidence the King confessed to the Venetian ambassador that an alliance for Renée was not the only practice he had on hand.[3] Apart from that indiscretion, however, the negotiations were kept very secret, the correspondence being conducted through the Duke of Longueville without the slightest hint even to Henry's own agents of what was going on. By June matters had reached a point beyond which Longueville's pen could not carry them, and the Général des Finances of Normandy left for England on the pretext of arranging for the Duke's ransom. There was some alarm in France when the General notified the first English demands, for these included the retention of Tournai, the cession of Boulogne, the payment of an enormous war indemnity, and the promise of a large

[1] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, pp. 618–19.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 613–14.

[3] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1218.

annual tribute; and the Pope's representative left hurriedly for Henry's Court, to bring that exacting sovereign to a more reasonable frame of mind.[1] As Robertet had already explained to Pandolfini, however, the French meant to do their best to come to terms with England, and to do so by a peace rather than by a truce, for if they were to make a truce merely, it might happen that the annoyance then felt in England about Ferdinand's behaviour would subside, giving a better opening for Imperial and Spanish intrigue. Louis had told the Florentine envoy with his own lips that he wanted peace: 'there shall be no difficulties on my part', he had said, 'except that I will pay no tribute, nor yield an inch of my kingdom'.[2]

Recent French history showed more than one precedent for buying off an English king, and Louis soon modified his attitude towards Henry's pecuniary demands; but the question of Tournai was more difficult to adjust, for it was much to ask of a King of France that he should incur the odium of ceding an ancient possession of the Crown, whilst the King of England was disposed to be equally obdurate, thinking a restoration of his conquest inconsistent with his honour. In the middle of July, when an agreement upon other points had been reached, Henry asked the Papal representative to go back to the French King, beg him to give way about Tournai, and warn him that Henry would meet a refusal with a rupture of the negotiations. Louis persisted in his declaration that he would not part with the place, but, as he summoned a conference to discuss the matter, it was inferred that he would be prepared to give in, if he could evade the sole responsibility for an unpopular decision. The conference met on 16th July, and with substantial unanimity advised its convener that the agreement with England should be carried through, even at the price of a cession of Tournai, if that sacrifice should be essential.[3] Thereupon Louis formally authorized the Duke of Longueville and the General of Normandy to negotiate an alliance with England, treat for a marriage with Mary, and agree to the payment of a million francs by annual instalments during a period of ten years.[4]

1 Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques*, vol. ii, pp. 627–8.
2 *Ibid.*, pp. 626–7.
3 *Ibid.*, pp. 640–2.
4 *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1325.

The treaty between Louis and Henry and their allies and confederates was signed in London on 7th August. It provided for a peace during the joint lives of the two sovereigns and for one year after the death of him who should die first, with liberty for his successor to give notice of renewal. Should the dominions of either sovereign be invaded, the other was to come to his aid with specified contingents of ships and men, and each, if so required by the other, was at the other's cost to give assistance in the recovery of territories occupied by an enemy. Neither was to give hospitality to the other's rebels, traitors, or enemies, or to issue letters of marque to the detriment of the other's subjects. The King of Scotland was included among the allies of France, but with a provision for his removal in the event of his attacking England. The King of Navarre was also included, and subsequent events give colour to the theory that there may have been a secret compact for united action to eject Ferdinand from Navarre and secure to Henry's Queen her lawful share in the government of Castile. No mention was made either of Boulogne or of Tournai, which therefore remained in the hands of their respective owners.[1]

A document of even date comprised the terms of the marriage treaty between Louis XII and Mary Tudor, who a few days previously had solemnly renounced her compact of marriage with the Archduke Charles. It was agreed that within two months of the solemnization of the ceremony known as the marriage *per verba de praesenti* the Princess, with apparel, jewellery, and gold plate befitting her rank, should at Henry's expense be conveyed to Abbeville, where Louis would wed her in person in face of the Church. Henry undertook that he or his heirs would provide the bride with a dowry of 400,000 gold crowns, but stipulated that the aforesaid jewellery and plate should be accepted in satisfaction of one moiety thereof and that the other moiety should be retained as a payment on account of the indemnity due from Louis; and Louis agreed to furnish his bride with such a dowry as it was customary for Queens of France to possess, and to undertake that she should be permitted to enjoy it

[1] Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. iv, part i, pp. 183–6; *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, p. xli; Canestrini et Desjardins, *Négociations diplomatiques*, vol. ii, p. 660.

for her life, wherever she might be resident. In view of these provisions it was not to be wondered at, if malicious persons alleged that the bridegroom had been obliged to dower the bride, because her brother had appropriated the portion bequeathed to her by her father's will.[1]

The marriage by proxy was solemnized on 13th August, when Louis was represented by his kinsman, Longueville, and when one of those grotesque scenes was enacted which sometimes formed the sequel to such a ceremony. 'Last Sunday', the Bishop of Asti was informed by a correspondent, 'the marriage was concluded *per verba de praesenti*. The bride undressed and went to bed in the presence of many witnesses. The Marquis of Rothelin [Longueville], in his doublet, with a pair of red hose, but with one leg naked from the middle of the thigh downwards, went into bed, and touched the Princess with his naked leg. The marriage was then declared consummated.'[2] In view of the great disparity in the ages of the spouses some supposed that it had been necessary to bribe Mary into acquiescence by an assurance that, if on this occasion she would marry to please her brother, on the next she should be left at liberty to please herself. Others understood, however, that such repugnance as the girl might naturally have felt was swallowed up in her satisfaction at contracting so brilliant a match. 'The Princess does not mind about the King of France being a gouty old man while she is a beautiful girl, so pleased is she to be Queen of France.'[3]

Contemporaries of every age and race concur in paying tribute to the beauty of the young English Princess. We have already noted the enthusiasm of the messenger from Dijon, who saw Mary when he visited the Court in the interests of La Trémoille's hostages. 'She is very beautiful', declared Lorenzo Pasqualigo, a Venetian merchant, who lived in London, 'and has not her match in all England. She is a young woman sixteen years old, tall, fair, and of a light complexion, with a colour, and most affable and graceful.' He was not afraid to call her a 'nymph from Heaven', he

[1] Dumont, *op. cit.*, pp. 188–90; *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1325; *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, pp. 439–40.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 1343, 1351.

[3] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 12.

added, for her beauty and charm warranted the expression.[1] An unknown correspondent told Margaret of Austria that he had seen the Princess dressed in the Milanese fashion, and thought that 'never man saw a more beautiful creature, nor one having so much grace and sweetness'.[2] No less favourable was the impression which she produced upon the mind of another of Margaret's correspondents, who saw her a few weeks later. 'I would not write to you about the Princess until I had seen her several times. I assure you that she is one of the most beautiful young women in the world. I think I never saw a more charming creature. She is very graceful. Her deportment in dancing and in conversation is as pleasing as you could desire. There is nothing gloomy or melancholy about her. . . . I had imagined that she would have been very tall, but she is of middling height.'[3] The mere sight of her portrait fired Louis to exclaim that he would give a half of his kingdom to win so fair a bride.[4]

As the day appointed for the marriage drew near, the bridegroom's eagerness to behold the bride, and his solicitude to content her, grew greater day by day. 'The King', she was informed by a friend in France, 'is sorely grieved that you send him no news of yourself, and also that your preparations over yonder go not on more briskly. Wherefore, Madame, I humbly beseech you to write to him and to contrive so that you may with all speed come to him, for nothing in the world could give him greater pleasure.' Mary took the hint, sending a letter to Louis couched in affectionate and grateful terms, in which she assured him that she shared to the full his impatience for the day when they should meet.[5] That day was close at hand when the Earl of Worcester had some talk with the King, and wrote to Wolsey to record his impressions. He had found Louis, he said, with 'a marvellous mind to content and please the Queen. . . . There is nothing

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, cols. 167–8; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 196. In fact she was eighteen years of age, having been born in 1496.

[2] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1185.

[3] *Lettres de Louis XII*, vol. iv, pp. 338–9, as rendered by Brewer, *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part iii, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii.

[4] *Calendar of State Papers, Milanese*, vol. i, p. 437.

[5] Champollion-Figeac, *Documents historiques inédits, Lettres de Rois, Reines et autres personnages*, vol. ii, pp. 543–6.

can displease him; he has provided jewels and goodly gear for her, . . . and showed me the goodliest and the richest sight of jewels that ever I saw. I would never have believed it, if I had not seen it. I never saw anything to equal fifty-six great pieces that I saw of diamonds and rubies and seven of the greatest pearls that I have seen. The worst of the second sort of stones were valued at 2,000 ducats, and for ten of the principal 100,000 ducats had been refused. All, the King said, was for her: but, merrily laughing, he said his wife should not have all at once, but at divers times, for he would have many and at divers times kisses and thanks for them. I assure you he thinketh every hour a day till he seeth her. He is never well but when he heareth speak of her. I make no doubt but she will have a good life with him with the grace of God.'[1]

One costly gift had already been sent to London, where it excited the wonder of the foreign merchants when they went to take leave of the Princess shortly before her departure for France. She received them in a gown in the French fashion, of wove gold, very costly; and on her neck was a jewelled diamond as large and as broad as a full-sized finger, with a pear-shaped pearl beneath it, the size of a pigeon's egg. The jewel had been sent as a present by the King of France, and the jewellers of 'the Row', who had been requested by King Henry to value it, estimated its worth at 60,000 crowns. Pasqualigo, who formed one of the company, thought it marvellous that the existence of such a jewel should not have been previously known. Probably, he surmised, it had belonged to the late King of France or to the father of the late Queen.[2]

In London during that summer, as the same worthy merchant informed his brothers in Italy, there was no more talk of war, the capital being given over to entertainments, banquets, and jousts held for the departure of the French Queen. Mary left London 'accompanied by four of the chief lords of England, . . . besides four hundred knights and barons, and two thousand gentlemen and other squires, with their horses. The lords, knights, and barons were all accom-

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, p. 1403.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, cols. 167–8; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 196.

panied by their wives, attended by their damsels. There would be about a thousand palfreys and a hundred women's carriages. There are so many gowns of wove gold and with gold grounds, housings of the horses and palfreys of the same materials, and chains and jewels that they are worth a vast amount of treasure; and some of the noblemen in this company, to do themselves honour, have spent as much as 200,000 crowns each. . . . According to the report of the courtiers, the Queen is to cross over to Boulogne, and the King of France will come as far as Abbeville to meet her.'[1]

It was the season of autumnal gales, and the sea, which is no respecter of persons, made sad havoc of the gay and gorgeous bridal train. 'The Lady Mary, daughter to Henry the Seventh, arrived at Boulogne on October 2nd,' a chronicler recorded. 'They set out of Dover fourteen great ships, but landed at Boulogne with four, for the others were driven by tempest, some to one place, some to another, with great jeopardy. . . . King Henry's great ship with four tops, called the Lubeck, was broken and lost a little west from Calais; there was in her at that time almost five hundred men, soldiers and mariners, that were appointed for to conduct the Lady Mary, the King's sister, for to bring her to Boulogne to be wedded to the French King; . . . there was not one hundred of the five hundred saved.'[2] Mary herself was in no small peril, for her ship was with difficulty brought to Boulogne, and there ran aground at the entrance of the harbour. The boats were ready, however, and, receiving the Princess, bore her to the land, where an English knight carried her ashore through the surf.[3]

Once safely ashore on the soil of her new kingdom, Mary soon forgot her sufferings and fright in the novelty of a strange adventure and in the splendour of the reception which awaited her in her future Court. In a letter from Abbeville, begun on the 8th and finished on the 14th October, an unnamed correspondent of the Bishop of Asti, French ambassador in Venice, thus described the meeting of Louis and his bride.

'This morning Angoulême returned, having accompanied

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, cols. 167–8; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, p. 196.

[2] *Chronicle of Calais*, p. 16.

[3] Holinshed, *Chronicle*, vol. iii, p. 604.

the Most Christian Queen as far as a village four leagues hence; and with him came Bayeux, Longueville, Lautrec, Monseigneur de Chaini, Monsr. de Pienes, and many other lords and gentlemen.

'At two p.m. the King, understanding that his consort was about to mount on horseback and come to Abbeville to join him, sent back Angoulême to meet her, accompanied by Monseigneur d'Alençon, by the brother of the Duke of Albany, by Monseigneur de Longueville, Monseigneur de Lautrec, Monseigneur de la Trimoulle, Louis Monseigneur (Monsignor di Loy), and many other lords and honourable gentlemen to accompany her.

'Monseigneur d'Angoulême met her at about a league's distance from the town on an extensive level, which the King had appointed for an interview; so he detained her there talking until the arrival of His Majesty, who was accompanied by the Cardinals of Auch and of Bayeux, by Monseigneur de Vendôme, by the Duke of Albany, by the Lord Steward and the Master of the Horse, and by the other lords and barons of France. There were also present the two hundred gentlemen and the guard of archers, all on horseback, and the other guard of Switzers on foot. The King rode a very beautiful Spanish horse, caparisoned with cloth of gold and black satin, in chequers; he himself being clad in a short riding dress of cloth of gold on crimson. He found a great multitude of horsemen and others who had come to witness this interview between the parties, and went up very boldly to the Queen as if they had been on intimate terms, and having first kissed his own hand to her, he then threw his arm round her neck, and kissed her as kindly as if he had been five-and-twenty. He came in this dress and on horseback, the more to prove his vigour; and then, after saying a few words to her, he returned into the town with those who had accompanied him, leaving with the Queen Monseigneur d'Angoulême and his companions aforesaid; and Monseigneur remained always at her side until they arrived at the palace appointed for her residence in the town.

'Of the inhabitants of Abbeville some 30 of the chiefs went forth, accompanied by their mayor, governor, and administrator of justice, who is elected annually, and they had with them 150 men, namely, 50 archers, 50 musketeers,

and 50 arbalast men, all dressed in red and yellow cloth. They went half a league to meet her, the captain of the castle going likewise, with his guard of some 30 men, all newly clad in his own livery.

'On entering the suburbs, she was met by all the clergy, with a canopy of white satin embroidered above and around with the roses, supported by two porcupines, under which she was accompanied to her palace.

'She herself rode a white palfrey caparisoned with cloth of gold on white; her own dress being cloth of gold on crimson, with close English sleeves; her head-tire consisted of certain gold ornaments in their fashion, with two large pearls on the left side. On her head she wore a shaggy hat of crimson silk, cocked over her left eye; and this she did not ever doff save on the King's arrival, and having then resumed it, she kept it on her head until she arrived at home. Of water from heaven there was no lack until evening, which caused some regret.

'She is generally considered handsome and well favoured, were not her eyes and eyebrows too light; for the rest it appears to me that nature *optime suplevit*: she is slight, rather than defective from corpulence, and conducts herself with so much grace, and has such good manners, that for her age of 18 years—and she does not look more—she is a paradise.

'On the road, in advance of her, were some fifty of her squires, dressed in silk of several sorts, with gold collars worth from 50 to 60 ducats each, some more, some less. Next came the Duke of Norfolk, the ambassadors, and other lords and barons, in pairs, according to grade, making a very fine show, all clad either in cloth of gold or silk of various qualities, in riding gear, and all wearing enormous gold collars, some doubled and some trebled, round their necks, while some wore them prisoner fashion; so that never was such pomp witnessed; and the greater part of them had velvet bonnets, some of one colour and some of another. The most noble took place nearest the Queen, a little in advance of whom were her two heralds with the coats of arms, in the fashion and with the devices of England; farther on marched eight trumpeters clad in crimson damask; then came the macers with gilt maces surmounted by a Royal

crown; near them were two grooms dressed in short doublets of cloth of gold with velvet caps, who followed, each leading a palfrey; and there were two other palfreys caparisoned with cloth of gold, ridden by two pages dressed in like manner in cloth of gold with velvet caps.

'The Queen herself was in the same costume and situation as already mentioned, and the Dauphin constantly beside her.

'At her stirrup were two running footmen in doublets of cloth of gold and velvet caps, like the grooms aforesaid.

'After her came a very handsome litter, borne by two large horses, on which were two other pages dressed like the aforesaid. It was covered with cloth of gold, figured with lilies, the housings of the horses being of similar materials. In front of the litter and at its back the emblems of France and England were displayed, namely, fleurs-de-lys and roses, one half red and the other half white, and at the sides and above and below were the dolphin and roses.

'Next in succession came five damsels on palfreys trapped with cloth of gold, the damsels being clad in their own fashion in divers ways, some in silk and some in cloth of gold.

'Then followed a carriage covered with cloth of gold, having a large flowered pattern, the trapping of the six horses which drew it being of the same material, and in it were seated four damsels.

'After these came six other damsels on palfreys, trapped with cloth of gold and murrey velvet figured, each damsel being attended by her running footman.

'Then another carriage with a covering of cloth of gold and murrey velvet, figured, drawn by six horses trapped with similar cloth, and five damsels inside it.

'Next came six other damsels on palfreys trapped with murrey velvet, with their running footmen.

'Then followed the other carriage, with six horses, covered and lined with murrey velvet, and after it came ten other damsels on palfreys trapped with murrey velvet, with white and light blue silk fringe.

'The Queen has brought some tapestry of cloth of gold and of silk of very large dimensions, more beautiful than any ever seen, with the arms of France and England united.

'Last of all, 200 archers, one third of whom were clad in doublets of green satin, with overcoats of cloth of —— and

belts of black velvet, with shaggy red and white hats. The second and third divisions were clad, part in black doublets and shaggy white hats on their heads, the last division wearing black doublets and grey hats, all marching processionally in pairs.

'Your right reverend Lordship must not be surprised at my representing well nigh everything in the superlative degree, for the reality exceeds my description, to the great glory of the Queen.

' "Madame", being slightly indisposed, was unable to go out of the town to meet her, but greeted her in the middle of the square, and accompanied her to her palace.

'In the evening, after supper, great entertainments were given, with dancing and music resounding to the skies, and according to her country people, the Queen delights but in hearing singing, instrumental music, and dancing.

'At the other end of the town, on the same evening, a great fire broke out, and burnt four houses near us, without being able to do us any harm, because the river flowed between; yet the wind was very high, and carried the flames towards the neighbouring houses, especially in the direction of the Venetian ambassador's house; but I believe our prayers saved us. We Italians were not without fear, being so near the spot, and by reason of the quality of those hovels, but God was merciful to us. The fire made greater progress than it would have done had it been permitted to ring the bells, but this was forbidden, to avoid disturbing the King at his amusements; and his people, not knowing anything of the fire, could not give assistance.'

So far the writer got on the 8th October; and then six days later he took up his pen again, to describe the second stage of the wedding festivities.

On the morning of the 9th, 'at about an hour and a half after day-break, the most Christian King and the Queen Mary of England, having to be joined together and to consummate their marriage, the Queen aforesaid [went forth], accompanied by the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Dorset, the Bishop of Durham, the Earl of Surrey, Lord Monteagle, Monsigr. Learnande, and by her other lords and knights, all in pairs well arrayed, some in cloth of gold and some in velvet, damasks, and satins, though the greater part of them

were in cloth of gold, some of one sort and some of another, the greater part of their gowns being lined with most beautiful sables, and some with other very fine furs, which they did not wear on their entry. They had all most massive gold chains, so that some, I think, must have found it burdensome to carry them; some wore them single round the neck, but very large, some doubled and trebled, and some doubled six times, whilst others had them a hand's breadth and very long, so that never was such magnificence beheld.

'The Queen was preceded by 26 knights, who walked in pairs, processionally, and a little in advance of her were her two heralds and the macers with their maces.

'Beside her were the aforesaid Duke of Norfolk and the Marquis of Dorset, with her other earls and barons, all cap in hand; then followed her gentlewomen and damsels, in number 13, one after the other, each between two gentlemen cap in hand, who accompanied her into the King's chamber, where but few other persons could enter save the princes of France, the Cardinals of Auch and Bayeux (who performed the mass), a few bishops, barons, and captains, and some of the house stewards. I am unable to write details of what took place in the hall [as an eye-witness], for I could not enter it, but I understand that this morning the King had preparation made there for the mass, and that the Queen arrived there, preceded by 70 persons, including trumpeters and English gentlemen. The King doffed his bonnet; the Queen curtseyed to the ground, and the King kissed her, and the treasurer Robertet presented to the King a necklace with two beautiful jewels, which His Majesty placed round the Queen's neck; whereupon mass was said. The two candles were held, the one by Monseigneur de Vendôme, the other by the Prince de Vendôme, and after the King had kissed the *pax* at the mass, he kissed the Queen.

'After the mass, the Bishop of Bayeux gave the consecrated wafer, one half to the King and the other half to the Queen, who kissed and then swallowed it; after which she departed, making a graceful curtsey.

'The King's gentlemen of the chamber were all there in line, as far as they could reach, with their maces in their hands, and after them came the archers of the guard in great number, making a very fine show.

'The French princes, namely Monseigneur the Dauphin, Alençon, Vendôme, Loraine, and the Admiral, the Lord Steward, the Duke of Albany, the Master of the Horse, and the Marquis of Rothelin, La Trimouille, and all the other lords, barons, and gentlemen, and in short the whole court, displayed great sumptuousness in their habiliments, most especially with regard to cloth of gold, some of one sort and some of another; amongst which that of the Master of the Horse [Galeazzo di San Severino] was considered the handsomest and most superb gown there, being cloth of gold "*soprarizo*", lined with sables. On Saturday evening, he received a piece of cloth of gold, for which he had sent to Italy by a messenger express; it cost 116 crowns a yard and he had it made up in a single night. It is said to have cost him 2,000 crowns.

'The mass having been performed by the aforesaid Cardinal de Bayeux, everybody withdrew to dine, always in the palace of the King, where open house was kept for all comers during three days.

'After the dinner they commenced dancing until evening. The most Christian King had the Queen dressed in French costume, and they gave a ball, the whole court banqueting, dancing, and making good cheer; and thus at the eighth hour, before midnight, the Queen was taken away from the entertainment by "Madame", to go and sleep with the King.

'The next morning, the 10th, the King seemed very jovial and gay and in love, [to judge] by his countenance.'[1]

Aged and infirm though he was, Louis delighted in the fresh beauty and high spirits of his fair young consort, and after three months of married life took up his pen to tell Henry VIII of 'the joy I have in the Queen, my wife, your good sister. Her conduct towards me hitherto has been and daily is such that I cannot too highly commend her or congratulate myself or do otherwise than love, honour, and cherish her.'[2] Only once, and that on the morrow of the marriage, had these amicable relations been imperilled.

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, cols. 202–7; *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, vol. ii, pp. 207–11.

[2] Champollion-Figeac, *Lettres de Rois, Reines, etc.*, vol. ii, p. 549.

Louis took a violent dislike to Lady Guildford, who had been sent by Henry to act as Mary's guardian and guide, and in the midst of the marriage festivities Mary wrote angrily to Henry to complain that her chamberlain and other men servants had been dismissed, 'and likewise my mother Guldeford, with other my women and maidens, except such as never had experience nor knowledge how to advertise me or give me counsel in any time of need'. Little, she was sure, could Henry have expected that she would be thus treated, and she marvelled much that my Lord of Norfolk should acquiesce so tamely in French demands. Had my Lord of York come with her in his room, then, she felt assured, she would have been more at ease. 'My Lord of York' did what he could from a distance, but his protest produced no effect. Louis told the Archbishop's spokesman that his wife and he were in as good and perfect love as any two creatures could be, and they were both of an age to rule themselves, with no need for servants that should look to rule them. Lady Guildford had taken upon herself from the first, not only to rule the Queen, but to intrude upon the Royal privacy, to debar the Queen from private conversation with others, and to stir up divisions among the ladies of the Court. Never, he declared, did a man better love his wife than he, but he would rather be without her than have her with such a woman about her; and whilst he, for his own part, wanted no strange women of any sort about the Queen, she, on her part, would, he felt sure, be content withal. In that prediction he proved to be correct, for Mary was soon rejoicing in her emancipation from 'mother Guldeford's' control: she loved the lady well, she confided to Worcester, but was content to be without her, for she might do what she would.[1]

The fame of the English rose spread far abroad in the land of the Lilies, and the people of Paris flocked to gaze upon their new mistress when she came from Abbeville and signified her intention of dining with the Municipality of the capital. Jerome Aleander, the humanist and future Cardinal, who was accustomed to the splendours of Italian Courts, declared that he had never seen so many rich dresses, such costly furs, or so large an assemblage of high-born

[1] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. i, part ii, pp. 1413, 1433–4.

persons.[1] An immense concourse of people invaded the Hôtel de Ville, crowding the whole building so densely both upstairs and down that it was impossible to push a way through the throng. On the very staircase by which the Queen was to enter, the Archers of the Guard strove in vain to keep a way clear, and Mary, after waiting some time on horseback at the door, was eventually obliged to gain the banqueting-hall by a narrow stairway which served the offices. The Royal dinner being prepared in a special kitchen upstairs, the Queen's table was served in a becoming fashion, but less distinguished guests fared indifferently, because the press on the stairs and in the dining-hall made it impossible for the waiters to carry up the dishes from the kitchens below stairs. It was noticed that during dessert Mary thought of her little step-daughter, Renée, then a child about four years old, and requested that some of the sweetmeats might be sent to the Royal nursery at Vincennes.[2]

There was to be a sudden end to these gay scenes. The King, who was fifty-four years of age, was not an old man, as we count age in these less exacting and softer days; but in a period when all men aged apace he had in his prime been careless and unsparing of himself, living strenuously in peace and war, in business and pleasure, in camp and Court; and excesses and exertions had long since undermined the constitution which had been the glory of his youth. At the time of his marriage with Mary there was a perceptible failure in his physical powers, a failure which dated from the serious illness to which he had nearly succumbed some years before. Experience having taught the need for precautions, his life since then had been regulated upon a strict regimen of abstinence and repose. The festivities which accompanied his marriage, and his efforts to amuse and please his lively young bride, rudely disturbed this tranquil existence; careful diet, early rest, and slippered ease were changed on the sudden for feastings and carousals, late hours of dance and play, and all the strain and fatigue which beset the central

[1] Jérôme Aléandre, 'Journal autobiographique (1480–1530)', ed. H. Omont, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. xxxv (1896), p. 31.

[2] Bonnardot, *Histoire générale de Paris. Registres des délibérations du Bureau de la Ville de Paris*, vol. i, pp. 218–19.

figure in a gay and crowded Court. As the doctors told him, but told him in vain, these were hazardous proceedings on the part of a middle-aged invalid, who was already a martyr to the gout; and the licensed jesters of the Parisian stage prophesied truly when they said, with mordant Gallic wit, that he was like to be carried off full tilt to another world by the filly he had got from the English King.[1] He was a sick man when the season of Christmas drew near, and those who saw him were shocked by his ageing, ailing, and feeble appearance.[2] Coming back from Saint-Germain, whither he had gone for change of air, he received Dandolo, the Venetian ambassador, in audience, but was fain to confess to him that the state of his health unfitted him for business.[3] When an envoy from Margaret of Austria reached the French Court on 30th December, the King was confined to his room, to which no one was admitted but his personal attendants and medical advisers.[4] In the course of New Year's Day, 1515, Dandolo learnt that Louis was sinking and had received extreme unction; and in his anxiety to obtain early information in a crisis of supreme consequence to his Government, he sent a messenger to the Royal Palace with instructions to wait there and bring back immediate news, if anything should occur. About ten o'clock in the evening the messenger returned, to report that the end had come.[5]

The safety of a kingdom, said Machiavelli, consists, not in having a ruler who governs wisely while he lives, but in being subject to one who so organizes it that, when he dies, it may continue to maintain itself; and in taking our leave of Louis XII we may pause to consider what value we should assign to his government, if judged by that criterion.

Briefly stated, the verdict of history upon the King is one of condemnation for his foreign policy, tempered by commendation of his domestic rule. Among critics of French

1 Fleuranges, *Mémoires*, ed. Michaud, p. 45; Brantôme, *Œuvres*, vol. ii, pp. 368–9; 'Loyal Serviteur', p. 368.

2 Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. ii, p. 3.

3 Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 363. 4 Le Glay, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 593.

5 Sanuto, *op. cit.*, col. 371. Recent writers have advanced the theory that Louis died, not on 1st January 1515, but on 31st December 1514. I adhere to the traditional date for the reasons given in the Appendix.

foreign policy during the reign Machiavelli himself holds a foremost place. In the judgement of that keen student of political affairs, Louis XII did in Italy the exact reverse of what he ought to have done. After winning Milan and by that success regaining the friends whom Charles VIII had lost and restoring the prestige which Charles had destroyed, he allowed Pope Alexander to occupy Romagna, and thereby alienated his friends and increased the already over-great power of a potential enemy. Not content with that blunder, he was then induced by his longing for Naples to divide it with the King of Spain, thereby giving himself a colleague where before he had been sole arbiter, providing a focus for ambition and discontent, and substituting for a ruler who would have become his tributary a sovereign by whom he himself might be driven out. The partition of Lombardy with the Venetians might be excused on the ground that it gave the King a footing in Italy, but no such excuse could be made for the partition of Naples, where no such necessity existed. It was legitimate to attack Naples, if his own resources sufficed for the purpose; but if they did not, he ought never to have agreed to a division. Louis, then, made five blunders: he destroyed the smaller powers; he increased the might of one who was already mighty; he introduced a very powerful foreign Prince; he did not himself come and live in Italy; he took no steps to establish his power there upon an enduring foundation. These blunders would not, perhaps, have been immediately fatal, had he not then made a sixth in the spoliation of the Venetians. To have abased Venice would have been reasonable enough, if he could have done it without aggrandizing the Church or bringing the Spaniards into Italy; but his policy with regard to these powers having been what it was, he should never have acquiesced in the ruin of Venice, in the maintenance of whose power he possessed the best security for his own peaceful enjoyment of Lombardy. As the event showed, the greatness of the Church and of the Spaniard in Italy was brought about by France, and it was by them that the ruin of French power was devised. When Georges d'Amboise once ventured to observe that the Italians did not understand war, Machiavelli answered: 'Nor do the French understand statecraft; otherwise they would not have permitted the aggrandize-

ment of the Papal States. He who aggrandizes his neighbour prepares the way for his own downfall.' [1]

With these strictures upon Louis XII's foreign policy modern critics are disposed to agree, as the remarks of one who is not the least distinguished among them will suffice to show. Louis XII, says Mignet, was an excellent Prince, endowed with great bravery, animated at home by the most beneficent intentions, loving his people deeply, and governing them with gentleness and justice, but led on abroad by an ambition unfortified by ability and uncontrolled by prudence, too enterprising in view of his love of economy or too economical in view of his love of enterprise, spoiling by blunders all that he attempted, and ruining by stupidity all that showed a promise of success. 'At the end of a reign of sixteen years he was not so far on as at the beginning. He had given up Naples, lost Milan, and suffered encroachments on his own kingdom, on the frontiers of which the King of Spain had taken Navarre, the King of England occupied Tournai, and the Swiss advanced as far as Dijon.' [2]

As Mignet indicates, however, there was another side to the reign, and a side for which due credit must be given in any estimate of Louis XII's character and career. The King's foreign policy with its glaring faults was in marked contrast to his domestic policy with its striking merits, for the man who on one side of the Alps was the Edward Hyde of discreditable adventures, on the other was the beneficent Jekyll of progress and reform. With this aspect of the reign, to which I have been able to pay but scant attention in the course of a narrative predominantly political and military in character, I purpose to deal more fully in another place. Here I must content myself with a brief reminder that such an aspect exists. In the domestic sphere the reign was a period of progress and prosperity, more especially during the earlier years, when Georges d'Amboise inspired the policy of the Government. Justice reformed, purified, and quickened by one of the greatest ordinances ever inscribed upon the statute book of the monarchy; order enforced, security established, and law respected by the Crown and

[1] Machiavelli, *Opere*, edit. of 1813, vol. iv, pp. 8–11; Waille, *Machiavel en France*, p. 3.

[2] Mignet, *Rivalité de François I et de Charles Quint*, pp. 54–5.

enforced upon the subject; the confusion of the customary law removed by its codification; wars waged at a distance and at the foreigner's expense, the financial administration reformed, and expenditure curtailed, so that taxation could be kept within bounds and sometimes in part remitted; military discipline rigidly enforced and marauding severely punished; vagabondage and robbery suppressed, and the roads made safe and put in repair; agriculture revivified by the security which ensured to the husbandman the fruits of his labour; commerce protected and industry encouraged; prosperity and abundance everywhere, the growing towns full of merchandise, the expanding farms well stocked and full of produce, the new-built *châteaux* furnished with a sumptuousness never before seen; a people tranquil, contented, happy, and gay: these are some of the salient features of a notable era in the internal history of France. In large measure, it is true, the rapid growth of prosperity was due to economic causes which were beyond the King's control, and for the beneficent operation of which he therefore deserves no praise; but if he did not produce prosperity, Louis XII is entitled to some credit for having promoted its growth by his paternal rule, and in the memory of a people which enjoyed its blessings without troubling to seek out their ultimate economic causes he acquired an abiding place as the author of a Golden Age. To that age the thoughts of many generations of French people would revert in any time of trouble and distress, when their cry was always for a return to the times of good King Louis, who had been called the Father of his People, because he ruled them with just and gentle hands.

APPENDIX

THE DATE OF LOUIS XII'S DEATH

It is no new thing for the student of history to find himself confronted by chronological perplexities, and he knows to his cost that they have a way of cropping up in unexpected quarters; but only the pessimist would anticipate their presence in connexion with the death of a King of France in modern times, since the probabilities are much in favour of such an event being recorded in minute detail in the official papers and historical writings of the time. And yet, if the question be asked, when Louis XII died, no certain answer can be given. For close upon four centuries it was generally believed that he died on the evening of 1st January 1515; but of late years that date has been called in question by distinguished authorities, who maintain that the death in fact occurred on the evening of 31st December 1514. In view of these doubts it is necessary to justify the statement in the text that Louis died on 1st January. It is to be feared that the process of justification will involve a somewhat prolonged discussion of a point of no great intrinsic importance; but the discussion will turn in some measure upon general principles, and those principles are not without their importance for the proper comprehension of the letters and papers of the period.

The traditional view is to be found in all the standard histories down to the end of the nineteenth century, and as recently as 1895 it was restated with deliberate emphasis by M. de Maulde-la-Clavière in his *Louise de Savoie et François I; trente ans de jeunesse (1485–1515)*.[1] It was only with the publication in 1903 of the fifth volume of Lavisse's *Histoire de France* that suspicion was first cast upon the accepted date. 'Après avoir langui pendant trois mois', wrote M. Henry Lemonnier in that book, when describing the King's end, 'il s'éteignit doucement, dans la nuit du 31 décembre au 1er janvier 1515.' Once enunciated, the new theory soon received support, and in the *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* for 1903–4[2] an able champion stood sponsor for it in the person of M. Henri Hauser. It is upon the arguments advanced in that article, as restated and reinforced in the supplementary note published in the *Revue d'histoire moderne* for 1927,[3] that the case for revision may be said to rest. I propose, therefore, to recapitulate those arguments, and then to subject them to detailed examination.

The case for revision may be stated thus. At first sight the bulk of contemporary evidence appears to favour the traditional view. The

[1] P. 387. [2] Vol. v, pp. 172–82. [3] Vol. ii, pp. 48–51.

writer of the official letters announcing Francis I's accession, which are subscribed: 'Escript à Paris le 1er jour de janvier'; the author of a semi-official pamphlet describing the obsequies of Louis XII;[1] the compiler of the minute-book of the Paris Municipality;[2] the recorder of the proceedings of the Chapter of Notre-Dame de Paris;[3] Jerome Aleander, the humanist and future Cardinal, who was then in Paris, and who was accustomed to jot down events in his diary as they occurred;[4] Louise of Savoy, the new King's mother, whose information in such a connexion would be accurate, and whose *Journal* was composed not long afterwards from her daily notes;[5] Fleuranges l'Adventureux, the new monarch's intimate friend and lifelong companion, whose *Mémoires* were written within ten years of the event;[6] the Dauphinois gentleman, who under the name of the 'Loyal Serviteur' recounted the exploits of Bayard;[7] Gilbert de Marillac, whose

[1] 'L'ordre qui fut tenu à l'obséque . . . de Louis, XIIe de ce nom, qui trépassa en la ville de Paris, en son Hostel des Tournelles, le lundi premier janvier 1514 [O.S.].'

[2] 'L'an dessusd. mil cinq cens et quatorze, le lundi premier jour de Janvier, environ dix heures au soir, trespassa de ce ciecle, en l'ostel des Tournelles à Paris, très hault, très noble et très puissant prince Loys de Valoys, Roy de France, nostre souverain Sr., XIIe de ce nom': *Histoire générale de Paris. Registre des délibérations du Bureau de la Ville de Paris*, ed. F. Bonnardot, vol. i, p. 220.

[3] 'Dicta die lune prima januarii eodem anno Mo. quingentesimo XIIII infra decimam et undecimam horas de nocte obiit illustrissimus et christianissimus dominus Ludovicus Francorum rex XIImus in ejus domo de Tournelles prope Bastidam Parisiensem, cujus anima in pace requiescat': *Revue d'histoire moderne*, 1927, p. 49, referring to *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris*, 1925, pp. 105 and ff.

[4] Under date 1st January 1515 he wrote: 'Ludovicus XII, Francorum rex, Parisiis moritur. Successit Franciscus primus, ejus gener, ad quem, cognationis jure, ex lege Salica, spectabat regnum': 'Journal autobiographique, 1480–1530', ed. H. Omont, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. xxxv (1896), p. 15. Elsewhere he recorded that '1515, kalendis januarii, hora circiter x vespertina, Ludovicus, Christianissimus Francorum rex, clausit diem': *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[5] 'Le premier jour de janvier 1515 mon fils fut roi de France. . . .

'Le premier jour de janvier 1515, environ unze heures de nuict, a Paris, aux Tournelles, trespassa le roi Louis XII; et le 3, qui fut mercredi, je partis de Romorantin, pour aller audict lieu': 'Journal', in Michaud and Poujoulat, *Collection des mémoires*, Series I, vol. v, p. 89.

[6] 'Il mourut par un premier jour de l'an': *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[7] 'Le premier jour de janvier ensuyvant, apres la minuyct': *La trés joyeuse . . . histoire du gentil Seigneur de Bayart*, composée par le Loyal Serviteur, ed. J. Roman, p. 368. It is not clear, comments M. Hauser, which night is referred to; nor can the author be regarded as an authority for events occurring in the French capital.

Histoire de la maison de Bourbon was based upon the souvenirs of his master, the Constable;[1] the Burgundian annalist, Macquéreau;[2] the composer of the *Rozier historial*;[3] Guillaume and Martin du Bellay, who, like Fleuranges, were deep in the intimacy of Francis I:[4] all these writers concur in placing the death of Louis XII on 'le premier jour le janvier' or 'le premier jour de l'an'. Not until we come to Jean Bouchet, whose *Panégyric du chevallier sans reproche, ou mémoires de la Trémoille* was written in 1524, do we find a French writer who says that the death occurred on 'le dernier jour de decembre l'an 1514',[5] though it is to be observed that Prato, a contemporary Milanese chronicler, recorded that 'esso Re mori il di ultimo di Decembre'.[6]

It may, at all events, be regarded as established that Louis passed away at a late hour of the day, certainly after nine o'clock in the evening, probably between ten and eleven, and possibly not much before midnight. '"Entre neuf et dix heures du soir", says the first official paper from the hand of his successor. "Environ dix heures du soir", says the *Registre des déliberations* of the town of Paris. "Entre la dixième et la onzième heure de nuit", says a Latin text [the Capitular record of Notre-Dame]. . . . "Environ onze heures de nuit", writes Louise of Savoy. And then the du Bellay brothers say: "le premier jour de janvier, environ minuit" ':[7] to which may be added the 'hora circiter X vespertina' of Aleander and the 'environ à dix heures du soir' of Macquéreau. The uncertainty, then, is not about the hour, but about the night: was it the evening of 31st December or the evening of New Year's Day?

Now Louise of Savoy and other writers who say that Louis XII

1 'Et trepassa le premier jour de Janvier dudit an mil cinq cens quatorze [O.S.] à l'hôtel des Tournelles à Paris': ed. A. de Laval in his *Desseins de professions nobles et publiques*, second edit., pp. 259–60.

2 'Le lundy premier jour du mois de janvier en l'an mil chinc cens et quatorze [O.S.], environ à dix heures du soir': *Traicté de la maison de Bourgoigne*, ed. J. A. C. Buchon, p. 61.

3 Louis XII 'rendit l'esperit à Dieu le lundy premier jour de janvier'.

4 'Le premier jour de janvier, environ minuit, 1514 [O.S.] il rendit l'âme à Dieu en sa maison de Tournelles, à Paris': *Mémoires*, ed. Michaud and Poujoulat, vol. v, p. 121; and cf. *Ogdoade*, 'januariis cal . . . cum rex esset salutatus'.

5 Petitot's *Collection*, Series I, vol. xiv, p. 492. Bouchet's chronology was far from accurate. For instances of his inexactitude see pp. 400, 421, 422, 433, 435, 458, 461, and 550 of Petitot's edition. And he himself assigned the death to 1st January in his *Annales d'Aquitaine*, ed. A. Mounin (1644), p. 340: 'Peu dura cette grande liesse et joye: car à la fin du mois de Decembre ensuivant, dudit an mil cinq cens quatorze, ledit Roy Loys fut malade d'une maladie, de laquelle il alla de vie à trespas le premier jour de Janvier ensuivant.'

6 *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. iii, p. 325.

7 *Revue d'histoire moderne*, vol. ii, p. 48.

died on 1st January also say that the reign of Francis I began on the 1st. Special attention was paid to the date by Louise of Savoy, because she had personal reasons for doing so: 'le premier jour de janvier je perdy mon mari, et le premier jour de janvier mon fils fut Roy de France'. Fleuranges likewise paid special attention to it as involving a singular coincidence and as being astrologically important: Francis, he says, was born on a New Year's Day, became Duke on a New Year's Day, and became King on a New Year's Day. Fleuranges was wrong about the birthday, for in fact Francis was born on 12th September 1494; but the mistake is significant, because it shows that in the Angoulême household 1st January was regarded as a fateful day. Now if this were so, and if Louis died between 11 o'clock p.m. and midnight, Francis would have been certain to ignore the few minutes which elapsed between the King's last breath and midnight and to date his reign from 1st January. So Louise was right about her Caesar becoming King on 1st January, and it was about this that she really cared. 'After the fatal 1st of January when her husband's death left her young and alone, a widow and a mother, the victim of all life's difficulties, financial, political, and moral, destiny made her the reparation which it owed: on 1st January her son became King of France.'[1] That she could have made a mistake about the date is a psychological impossibility. But the death of Louis was of secondary importance to her, being of value only for its bearing upon her son's accession. 'Thus, when Louise writes that her son became King on a 1st of January, she gives the expression its full chronological value; it is with the dawn of the new year that the new reign begins. On the contrary, when she speaks of the death of King Louis XII, the expression has a less exact meaning. Indeed, if Louis died on 31st December 1514, between eleven o'clock and midnight, might it not be said that he died on 1st January 1515?'[2]

It must be borne in mind that it is not possible to give to the expression, 'the 1st of January', in a sixteenth-century text the precise value which it would have to-day. 'The expression has different meanings according to circumstances. People reckoned sometimes in the Roman way, from midnight to midnight; sometimes from 6.0 a.m. to 6.0 a.m.; sometimes astronomically, from midday to midday.' Instances may be quoted to show that both Louise herself and Aleander sometimes used the astronomical method of calculation.

Moreover, there are facts which tell in favour of 31st December. First, Louise of Savoy was at Romorantin at the time, and she got the news in time to leave for Paris on 3rd January. Secondly, if the letters in which Francis announced his accession were dated 1st January, then Louis must have died on the previous evening, unless

[1] *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. v, p. 177. [2] *Ibid.*

it is to be supposed that they were 'hurriedly written in the last moments of 1st January 1515'. These letters form the first item in the *Ordonnances des Rois de France—Règne de François Ier*, and run as follows: 'Aujourd'huy, entre neuf et dix heures du soir, il a pleu à Dieu prandre et appeller à soy le Roy, nostre sire et beau-père, et nous laisser son successeur à la couronne et cestuy nostre royaulme.... Escript à Paris le 1er jour de janvier.' The word 'aujourd'huy' is here used in the same vague sense as the '1er janvier' of Louise of Savoy's second entry, and it means, 'during the night which is just over'.

Finally, there are the entries relating to the event in Sanuto's *Diarii*. 'Les contradictions sur la date de la mort se retrouvent dans les *Diarii* de Sanuto, t. xix, p. 369 et suiv. Mais, p. 371, on voit que l'ambassadeur vénitien Dandolo avait commencé une lettre au Sénat le 31 à 24 heures: "Soa Maesta stava *in extremis* et era uliato." Puis son messager est retourné au palais, et le matin du 1er, *à 6 heures*, il reprend la plume pour dire que "in quella hora il Xmo Re era spirato".'[1] Now Louis died in the evening; and if Dandolo knew at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 1st that he was dead, then the death must have occurred on the evening of the previous day, 31st December. It is true that Sanuto also records the presentation by the French ambassador in Venice on 29th January of an official letter from Paris of 2nd January, 'per la qual esso Re scrive pur di 2 del presente, la morte dil Re christianissimo a di primo, hore 10'; but this cannot be set against Dandolo's dispatch, written 'dans la nuit même'.

The case for revision may, then, be summarized thus. It is established by abundant evidence that Louis died at a late hour of the day; the few moments which elapsed between his last breath and midnight being not unnaturally ignored, the death was regarded as having occurred on the day which was about to begin, namely, 1st January, especially by those connected with the Angoulême household, in which that day was believed to possess a special significance; and on no other hypothesis can it be explained how the letters by which Francis announced his succession could be dated 1st January, or how the news could have reached Louise of Savoy at Romorantin in time to permit of her departure for Paris on 3rd January, or how Dandolo, the Venetian ambassador, could write at six o'clock in the morning of the 1st that the King was dead.

It will be well to begin our scrutiny of these arguments with a consideration of that founded upon Dandolo's dispatch, for if the interpretation of it given above be correct, the ambassador's testimony is decisive. The meaning of the dispatch, or of Sanuto's summary of it, depends upon the writer's method of computing time: did

[1] *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. v, p. 181.

he reckon in what is now the universal, and was then the prevalent, civil manner, that is to say, from midnight to midday and then on again to midnight, for it is under such a system of reckoning only that he could be described as beginning his dispatch 'dans la nuit même' and finishing it 'le matin à six heures'? Amongst various methods of computation then in vogue there was one, from sundown to sundown, which is of supreme importance here, because it was the method most commonly adopted in Italy at that time. 'The Italians', says John Addington Symonds in a note to his translation of *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini*,[1] 'reckoned time from sundown till sundown, counting twenty-four hours. Twenty-two o'clock was therefore two hours before nightfall. One hour of the night was one hour after nightfall, and so forth. By this system of reckoning, it is clear that the hours varied with the season of the year; and unless we know the exact month in which an event took place, we cannot translate any hour into terms of our own system.' The Italian method of computation, as in use at a later period, when it had been systematized, is described by Goethe in his *Italienische Reise* under date 17th September 1786; and it has been dealt with exhaustively in several modern works on chronology. 'Die italienische (oder böhmische) Uhr', says one learned writer,[2] 'zählt vom Einbruch der Dunkelheit an durch 24 Stunden fort, die jeweilige *hora xxiv* bildet also das Ende jedes Tages. Als Zeit der Dunkelheit betrachtete man, jedoch in den verschiedenen Orten nicht einheitlich, die Zeit um etwa ½ Stunde nach Sonnenuntergang, mit welcher auch das Ave-Maria-Lauten zusammenfiel und bei der die Arbeit eingestellt wurde.' 'Diese Art der Zeitbestimmung', says another,[3] 'die man italienische oder böhmische Uhr nennt, war die herrschende in Italien.' Many instances of its use might be quoted from the book in which Dandolo's dispatch is recorded, but it will suffice to cite a few examples from that and other sources. Of the battle of Ravenna, which began about eight o'clock in the morning and lasted till about four o'clock in the afternoon, the Italians say that it 'comenzò a hore 12, e durò fino a hore 19' or 'fin a le 20';[4] Louis XII is said to have entered Genoa on 29th April 1507 'a hore zercha 16, la matina';[5] Prato speaks of one who, 'essendo tutto un giorno caminato con le gente sua, la sera alle due ore arrivò a

[1] Edition of 1911, p. 39, note.

[2] F. K. Ginzel, *Handbuch der mathematischen und technischen Chronologie*, vol. iii, p. 94.

[3] Franz Rühl, *Chronologie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, p. 212. Cf. J. C. Houzeau's article on the history of the hour in the *Bulletin* of the Société Royale Belge de Géographie, 1888.

[4] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xiv, cols. 111, 122, and 127; and cf. *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, Series IV, vol. xviii, p. 79.

[5] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. vii, col. 69.

Vaprio';[1] in discussing events at Bologna in November 1506 Jean d'Auton speaks of 'le lendemain à quatorze heures, qui sont VIII heures en France';[2] in June 1513 a correspondent of Margaret of Austria tells her that he has letters of the 6th from the Duke of Milan about the battle of Novara, and that 'data litterarum erat hora XIII, more Italico, que potest esse hora circiter nona ante meridiem';[3] and in the Journals of Aleander, to whose chronology I shall have occasion to recur, the following phrases are found, 'hora 18 ab occasu solis, praecedentis diei', and '1512, die 27 martii, hora 19, minutis 25, Romano more, hoc est hora 1, minutis 46, post meridiem'.[4] That this was Sanuto's method of reckoning is certain, and I think that there can be little doubt that it would also have been employed by Dandolo. If so, any hour mentioned by them would be reckoned 'ab occasu solis', and in Paris on 1st January 1515 sundown occurred at about four o'clock p.m. Bearing this in mind, let us now re-examine the dispatch, and as a first step to that end let us see how it is summarized by Sanuto.

'*Di Franza, di sier Marco Dandolo dotor e cavalier, orator nostro, da Paris, prima, di* 24. Di occorentie de lì; e dil zonzer il ducha di Barbon e li altri signori capitani. E come il Re se resentiva assai, et li era venuto la gota in la schena, *adeo* li feva noglia assai, et lo havia indebilito. Scrive di primo, et ehe [? che] a hore. . . . Soa Maestà stava *in extremis*, et era uliato. Et poi, di hore 6, scrive esser ritornato il suo messo da palazzo, riporta in quella hora il Christianissimo Re esser spirato, et per esser nova di grandissima importantia, spaza questa letera breve.'[5]

Having regard, first, to Sanuto's usual method in recording dispatches, and, secondly, to the prevalent Italian system of reckoning time, the entry may, I suggest, be rendered thus in terms of our own system.

'Summary of dispatches from France, from Sier Marco Dandolo, Doctor and "Cavaliere", our ambassador in Paris:

'First dispatch, dated the 24th [December].[6] About events in Paris;

[1] *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series I, vol. iii, p. 308.

[2] *Chroniques de Louis XII*, ed. R. de Maulde, vol. iv, p. 82.

[3] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, p. 522.

[4] *Notices et entraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. xxxv, pp. 8 and 40.

[5] *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 371.

[6] I cannot reconcile with Sanuto's text the statement that 'Dandolo avait commencé une lettre au Sénat le 31 à 24 heures: "Soa Maesta stava *in extremis* et era uliato".' 'Prima, di 24' means, I think, that Sanuto was summarizing several letters, written on different dates, but dispatched together, and that the first of these was dated 'the 24th [December]'. There is no mention of the 31st in the summary, as I read it, and in any case the words,

and about the arrival of the Duke of Bourbon and other leading lords. And how the King was in a poorish state of health: he had got "gout" in the back; it was causing him a good deal of pain, and had weakened him.

'In the second dispatch, dated the 1st [January], he wrote that at . . . o'clock His Majesty was *in extremis*, and had received extreme unction. And then, at 10.0 p.m., he added that his messenger had returned from the Palace and reported that the Most Christian King had just passed away; and that, the news being of the greatest importance, he was sending it off at once.'

Thus interpreted, the dispatch falls into line with the great bulk of French testimony, corresponding more or less exactly with the chronology of Francis I's letters ('entre neuf et dix heures du soir'), of the Municipal minute-book ('environ dix heures au soir'), of the Capitular register ('infra decimam et undecimam horas de nocte'), of Aleander ('hora circiter x vespertina'), and of Macquéreau ('environ à dix heures du soir'). Moreover, the events which it narrates seem to approximate more nearly to the probabilities of the situation. Dandolo was well aware of the extreme importance to the Signory of a demise of the French Crown, with its possible effect upon the Italian policy of France; he himself said that the news of it would be 'di grandissima importantia'. As soon, therefore, as he heard of the King's serious illness, he took steps to secure early information about its progress, stationing a messenger at the Palace for that express purpose; and when the news of the death reached him, he hastened to forward it to Venice with the least possible delay. It is difficult to believe that the messenger can have allowed the whole night to pass before furnishing the ambassador with the information which he so urgently required: yet that was what happened, if the King died about 10 p.m. and Dandolo did not get the news until 6 a.m. on the following morning. Nor is this the only difficulty, for Dandolo took up his pen 'at the sixth hour' to add, not only that his messenger had just returned to announce the death, but that according to his report the King had died 'in that self-same hour'—'riporta in quella hora il Christianissimo Re esser spirato'. 'Quella hora' was the sixth hour, and if the sixth hour was the sixth hour of the morning, then according to Dandolo, it was not in the evening at all, nor was it on 31st December, but it was at six o'clock in the morning of 1st January that Louis died. It is true that, had the King died on the preceding evening, Dandolo might not have known it, when writing hurriedly on the morning of the 1st; but he must have discovered the circumstance soon afterwards, and he would not then have adhered to the

'Soa Maesta stava *in extremis*', are immediately preceded by the words, 'Scrive di primo, et che a hore . . . '.

original date in later dispatches, as he did when he again referred to the 1st as being the day on which the King died—'da dì primo che morì il Re'.[1]

Sanuto was not the only diarist who summarized Dandolo's dispatch, and attention may be called to another version which appears to me to furnish strong confirmation of the interpretation which I have suggested. This version occurs in the diaries of Marcantonio Michiel, which have been printed in the notes to the 'Storia Veneta' of Daniele Barbaro in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*:[2] the entry runs as follows. 'A di 13 Gennaio 1514 [o.s.]. La notte avanti si ebbero lettere di Francia dall' ambasciatore, come il re di Francia stava *in extremis*, e poi, come era morto il primo dì dell' anno nuovo a ore tre della notte venendo ai due.' The words 'ore tre' are slightly disconcerting; they may be due to a clerical error or misprint; but I hazard another explanation. When Sanuto summarized the dispatch he gave the hour at which the King had died, 'hore 6', but did not recollect at what hour he had received extreme unction ('a hore . . . Soa Maesta stava *in extremis*, et era uliato'). Possibly Michiel's 'ore tre' is Sanuto's 'hore . . . ', and through imperfect recollection of the dispatch he assigned the death to the hour which had in fact been mentioned in connexion with the unction. However that may be, his version appears to be conclusive upon two points: the day of the death was 1st January, for it was New Year's Day ('il primo dì dell' anno nuovo'), and the hour was a late one of that day, for it belonged to the 'notte venendo ai due'.

It may be objected that my interpretation of the dispatch accords no better than its rival with another entry in Sanuto's *Diarii* relating to the King's death. 'On the morning of the 29th [January] the Bishop of Asti, the French ambassador, came to the College with letters addressed to him by the new King, called Francis, dated from Paris on the 2nd, with an enclosure addressed to our Signory. Writing on the 2nd of the present month, the new King announced the death of the Most Christian King on the 1st, at the tenth hour ('a dì primo, hore 10') and his own accession to the throne.'[3] It may be said that, if 'hore 6' in Dandolo's dispatch is to be taken to mean ten o'clock at night, then 'hore 10' must mean two o'clock in the morning. The reply to such an objection seems to be that the Bishop of Asti's letters will accord exactly with Dandolo's dispatch, if we assume that the

[1] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 435, dispatches of 17th January and 4th February.

[2] Series I, vol. vii, part ii, p. 1108.

[3] 'A dì 29 [Gennaio 1515], la matina, vene in Colegio lo episcopo di Aste orator di Franza, con lettere di questo Re nuovo Francesco nominato, a lui scrite, di 2, da Paris, et una drizata a la Signoria nostra. Per la qual esso Re scrive pur di 2 dil presente, la morte dil re Christianissimo a dì primo, hore 10, e lui esser successo nel regno': Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, cols. 397–8.

hour mentioned in them is calculated, not by the Italian, but by the French, system of reckoning time. Since these letters, though epitomized by Sanuto in his own language, were of French origin, forming, indeed, the official French announcement of the demise of the Crown, the assumption is not in itself unreasonable; nor will it be at all discredited, if Sanuto's version be compared with the text of one of these announcements which I have already cited from the *Ordonnances des Rois de France—Règne de François Ier.*[1] That letter was addressed to the town of Angers, and it is recorded that similar communications were sent to other French cities and to at least one foreign Government. No doubt, therefore, when Francis wrote to the Signory on the 2nd, he was following a common form; and in that event it is legitimate to infer that what Sanuto did was to summarize the letter without attempting to translate the phrase, 'entre neuf et dix heures du soir', into terms of his own and Dandolo's system of reckoning. In other words, the 'hore 6' of the first entry and the 'hore 10' of the second are one and the same hour, and that hour is 10 p.m.

If confirmation of this theory be desired, it may be found in the Swiss state papers. 'Le 2 Janvier 1515', says M. E. Rott in his *Histoire de la représentation diplomatique de la France auprès des Cantons suisses*,[2] 'un chevaucher d'écurie et un serviteur de René d'Anjou, Seigneur de Mézières, quittent Paris afin de se rendre aux Ligues, chargés d'annoncer aux Confédérés la mort de Louis XII, survenue le premier de l'an, et de presenter au corps helvétique des lettres du nouveau roi.' Of these letters the following is recorded to have been 'eine deutsche Abschrift'. 'Paris, 2 Januar 1515. Franz I schreibt an die Eidgenossen: Gestern zwischen der neunten und zehnten Stunde Abends habe es Gott gefallen, den Konig, seinen Herrn und Schwäher, zu sich zu berufen und ihn als Nachfolger der Krone Frankreich und der ihr zugehörigen Herrschaften zuruckzulassen.'[3] This text is an almost exact translation of the letter from Francis I to the town of Angers, and it becomes increasingly difficult to resist the conclusion that there was a 'common form' for the announcement of the death. Less accurate than his Swiss contemporary, Sanuto succumbed to the alluring brevity of 'hore 10', but, like him, he must have been translating the phrase, 'entre neuf et dix heures du soir'.

Similarly, I think that Aleander was employing the French method of computing time when he wrote that Louis died 'hora circiter X vespertina'. It is true that Aleander was by birth an Italian, but he

[1] See above, p. 271.

[2] Vol. i, p. 197.

[3] *Die Eidgenössischen Abschiede*, ed. A. P. Segesser, vol. iii, part ii, pp. 848–9.

had long since become cosmopolitan by virtue of his career: in the great publishing house of Venice he had entered into the kingdom of letters which knew no local divisions, and by the year 1515 he had become familiar with northern Europe in the schools of Orleans, in the stalls of Chartres and Liège, and in the Rectorial chair of Paris. Using several systems of computing time, as he can be shown to have done by his Journals, he would have been likely to use the French method when writing in Paris and mentioning an event which had just occurred there; and an examination of his Journals suggests that, when an hour is described as 'matutina' or 'vespertina', then as a rule that hour is calculated by the modern system.

So much for Dandolo, but before we take leave of Sanuto we must notice one more entry in the *Diarii*, as it is invoked in aid of the revisionist case. 'Le 13, l'ambassadeur de France vient au Collège annoncer l'avènement du roi: dès le matin tous les seigneurs sont venus le reconnaître; "*Item*, che *quel zorno* missier J. G. Triulzi era zonto a Paris, a dì primo". Donc la reconnaissance du nouveau roi est du 1er au matin.'[1] Again, let us examine the whole passage as Sanuto wrote it. 'Vene l'orator di Franza in Colegio, *licet* havesse inteso la morte dil suo Re, dicendo per questo non è da smarirse, e monstrò letere aute di Roma con questo aviso di la morte dil suo Re, et che monsignor di Angulem, zenero dil Re, è quello a chi di *jure* apartien la corona, per esser dil sangue di la caxa di Valois e la matina tutti quelli signori era andato a darli l'ubidientia come il Re. *Item*, che quel zorno missier Zuan Jacomo Triulzi era zonto a Paris, a dì primo.'[2] I think that the explanation of this passage is that 'the day' which Sanuto had in mind was the day of the death, and that the train of thought which led him to make use of the words 'quel zorno' was as follows: 'The ambassador came to the College; he had heard of the death of his King on the 1st; he said that the Crown had passed to Monseigneur d'Angoulême, whom all the lords had acknowledged in the morning [of the day after]; and that on the day itself, the 1st, Trivulzio had reached Paris.' Sanuto had just summarized Dandolo's dispatch announcing the death on the 1st—'a dì primo'. It seems impossible that in the very next paragraph he can have used the words 'quel zorno . . . a dì primo', to mean the day after the death. In other words, 'la matina' when the lords did homage was not the morning of 'quel zorno' on which Trivulzio reached Paris, and it was to make this clear that Sanuto added the words 'a dì primo', which he had just given as the date of the death.

We must now return to the letters in which Francis announced his accession. These letters, or some of them, are dated 1st January, and

[1] *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. v, p. 181.
[2] *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 372.

it is said to be absurd to suppose that they can have been written hurriedly in the last few moments of the day upon which Louis died. I do not feel satisfied that there is any absurdity in the supposition. Supposing Francis to have written on the actual night of the death, his letters may have been hurriedly composed, but the event was not such as to render their composition on that night so very improbable. King Louis' death was not a bolt out of the blue, the result of some sudden illness or unlooked-for accident. He was a man 'anchien, débile et maladieux',[1] whose life had repeatedly been despaired of in recurrent maladies, and as far off as distant Rome it was known in well-informed quarters that his death had long been expected—'questa morte del Re era piaga anteviduta'.[2] Francis had received ample warning, and he must have been prepared with the measures to be taken. What more probable than that those measures should comprise an immediate announcement to the kingdom of his advent to the throne? If we suppose that Louis passed away about 10 o'clock in the evening, and that Francis immediately set the secretaries at work to communicate the tidings, it seems possible to give their natural meaning to the words, 'to-day, between nine and ten o'clock in the evening'. It would not, perhaps, have been surprising if the secretaries, working on into the small hours of the morning, had continued to date their letters 'January 1st', regardless of the fact that midnight had struck and the morning of the 2nd had begun. In fact, however, that does not seem to have happened, for whilst some letters were dated the 1st, others, including those to foreign Governments, were dated the 2nd. This is a fact which in itself appears to me to point to the 1st as the date of the death. The letters were short; many copies might have been made in a day; and, the foreign relations of France being what they were, Francis would have lost no time in telling Henry VIII of his brother-in-law's death or in announcing to the Venetian Signory his own accession to the throne. But if Louis died on 31st December, Francis allowed the whole of 1st January to pass without an attempt to communicate with Henry or to notify the Signory, for, as we have seen, the letters presented by the Bishop of Asti were dated the 2nd, as were the similar letters addressed to the Swiss Confederacy, whilst we learn from the *Journal* of Jean de Barrillon that 'le second jour de janvier, le Roy voullut donner ordre aux plus nécessaires affaires du royaume. . . . Premièrement envoya au Roy d'Angleterre . . . luy signiffier le trespas d'icelluy Roy.'[3] If Louis died on the evening of the 1st, however, then the dispatch of letters on the 2nd would have been a reasonably prompt notification.

[1] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. ii, p. 3.
[2] Canestrini et Desjardins, *Negociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, vol. ii, p. 688.
[3] Ed. P. de Vaissière, vol. i, p. 3.

The picture of Francis and the secretaries thus working on the night of the death is not entirely a matter of hypothesis and conjecture, for it is that which is conjured up by the words of Fleuranges, who thus describes Louis' end: 'Lui estant bien malade, envoya quérir monsieur d'Angoulesme. . . . Il mourut par un premier jour de l'an, sur lequel jour fist le plus horrible temps que jamais on veit. . . . Lui mort, Monsieur d'Angoulesme se vestit de deuil, comme le plus prochain de la couronne, et s'en vint au palais, et incontinent fist advertir en diligence tous les princes et dames du royaume, et spécialement madame sa mère; et, sans point de faulte, ce lui feust une belle estrègne pour ung premier jour de l'an. . . . Et, à vous bien dire, ledict sieur d'Angoulesme naquit par ung premier jour de l'an; son père mourut par un autre premier jour de l'an; et après eut le royaume de France par ung premier jour de l'an.'[1] '*Incontinent fist advertir en diligence*'—could Fleuranges have hit upon more apt words to describe Francis feverishly toiling beside the dead King's couch to herald to the kingdom the great tidings that a new sun had arisen? And if, as Fleuranges says, and as would have been certain to happen, special steps were taken to get those tidings to Louise of Savoy, she might well have received them in time to leave Romorantin on the 3rd, for Romorantin is not much over a hundred miles from Paris, and it would not have taken a courier very long to cover that distance.

Whilst we are considering the testimony of Fleuranges, we may look rather more closely at his insistence upon the recurrence of New Year's Day as a memorable occasion in the annals of the Angoulême House. The existence of this superstitious feeling is invoked in aid of the case for revision: it is said that, if New Year's Day was a fateful day by Angoulême tradition, it would account for the mother and the friend of the young head of the House passing over those few moments of a closing day, and dating the new reign from the day that was at hand. But is not this argument a two-edged weapon? It is quite true that, if Louis did really die on 31st December, a 'fateful day' obsession might induce Louise and Fleuranges to ignore the inconvenient minutes which separated the event from New Year morning. If Louis died on 1st January, however, the influence of the obsession would be just as powerful in the other direction; they would seize upon those last moments of the closing day to bring the great occurrence within the limits of the magic anniversary, and with one eye on the calendar and the other on the clock they would triumphantly give expression to the idea embodied in the famous phrase, 'Le Roi est mort. Vive le Roi!'

Moreover, the revisionist argument here is something worse than

[1] *Mémoires*, ed. Michaud et Poujoulat, Series I, vol. v, p. 45.

a two-edged weapon, for it involves a charge of slipshod dating against Louise of Savoy which cannot be justified. It assumes her readiness to speak of the King's death as occurring on the 1st, when in fact it had occurred late in the evening of the 31st. Whether or no this is an inaccuracy of which others might be suspected, it would seem in the highest degree improbable that Louise could have been guilty of it. M. Hauser has himself declared elsewhere[1] that 'la chronologie [du *Journal*] est en général d'une rare exactitude', and the tribute is well deserved. Throughout her diary she records events with a meticulous accuracy which becomes positively wearisome, noting the year, the month, the day, the hour, and often even the minute, and sometimes in her passion for precision explaining her use of one method of computing time by repeating herself in terms of another. Thus she records of her daughter's birth that it occurred on 'l'unzième jour d'avril à deux heures du matin, c'est-à-dire le dixième jour à quatorze heures dix minutes, en comptant à la manière des astronomes'.[2] The writer of such entries as that would not have paltered with dates when recording the event, memorable to her above all others, which placed the crown, so eagerly desired, so long awaited, so nearly lost, upon the head of him whom she adored as 'mon roi, mon seigneur, mon César, et mon fils'.

Where the author of the *Sources de l'histoire de France* for the period has reaped, humbler students cannot hope for a fruitful gleaning; but attention may be directed to a few fresh pieces of evidence which bear upon the problem.

I make the revisionists a present, for what they are worth, of two passages which seem to support their case.

From the *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. ii, p. 229: 'Andrea Badoer, Ambassador in England, to the State. London, 6th January. Receipt there of the news of the death of the King of France on the last day of December.' This is based upon the entry in Sanuto's *Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 420, and it is not quite accurate, or at least it is not complete. Sanuto's entry is as follows: '*De Ingalterra, di sier Andrea Badoer orator nostro, di 6.* Come haveano auto la nova di la morte del re di Franza de lì, si presto. . . . Et par havesseno de lì il re di Franza morisse a dì ultimo Decembrio, de morte subitanea.' The comment, 'and it seems that they have it there that the King of France died on the last day of December', implies an assurance in Sanuto's mind that Badoer's information was inaccurate.

From G. Le Doyen's *Annalles et Chroniques du Pais de Laval et parties circonvoisines, depuis l'an 1480 jusqu'à l'année 1537*, ed. L. la Beauluère, p. 153:

[1] *Les sources de l'histoire de France: XVIe siècle*, vol. i, p. 25.
[2] Michaud et Poujoulat's *Collection*, Series I, vol. v, p. 87.

'À la fin du moys de decembre,
Ledict Roy, dont je me remembre,
Print fin.'

The author's language is vague, and he is remote in space and time from the event in question.

Against these passages may be set the following pieces of evidence in favour of the traditional date. None is of first-rate importance, but collectively they have a certain cumulative effect.

Philippe Dalles, the envoy of Margaret of Austria, wrote to her from Paris in these terms on 3rd January: 'Moy estre arrivé à Paris, quatre jours avant, nulz ne parloit au roy et n'entroit devers luy que ses familiers, medecin et cireurgien. Je fus parler à Robertet et luy baillay mes lectres. . . . Le lendemain le roy trespassa, le jour du nouvel an, entre dix et onze heures du matin.'[1] Since the words 'du matin' cannot be reconciled with the rest of the evidence, it seems reasonable to ascribe them to misapprehension or error; and it seems equally reasonable to assume that it would be the occurrence of the death on New Year's Day which would stick in the writer's mind.

On 11th January Pietro Pasqualigo, who was on his way to France as ambassador, wrote from Nice that the Doge of Genoa 'avea nova certissima di Franza, a dì 1, il Christianissimo Re morite'.[2] Since the date here given refers, not so much to the event, as to the dispatch of the news of it, this passage cannot be said to do more than raise a presumption in favour of 1st January.

In an undated letter written in Scotland, apparently at some time during January 1515, the writer, Adam Williamsone, tells Gawin Douglas that 'the King of France is dead beyond doubt. A monk has arrived here who was in France on New Year's Day, when he died.'[3]

Among the chroniclers there is general agreement, though that agreement is discounted by the fact that several of them were merely translating or copying their predecessors. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Gaguin,[4] Pierre Desrey,[5] Nicole

[1] Le Glay, *Négociations diplomatiques entre la France et l'Autriche*, vol. i, p. 593.

[2] Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 417.

[3] *Letters and Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. ii, part i, p. 19.

[4] R. Gaguin, *Compendium de Origine et Gestis Francorum*, edit. of 1528, fo. cccxxxiii: 'Ecce infoelix morbus Ludovicum invasit, quo post octavum diem mortales artus exuere Kalendis Januarii M.ccccc. ac xiiii. Regni sui decimo septimo, ab implacabili parca coactus est.'

[5] Pierre Desrey, *Les Croniques de France*, edit. of 1516, fo. ccxli: 'Il mena la royne à Sainct Germain en Laye pour le deduyt de la chasse, et puis sen retourna à Paris en son logis des Tournelles, là ou il cheut malade au lict environ la fin du moys de decembre, et iceluy voyant accroistre et augmenter sa malladie, disposa de sa conscience comme ung bon catholique et aussi des affaires du royaulme, et après avoir receu les sainctz sacremens de l'Eglise, il

Gilles,[1] Bourdigné,[2] Belleforest,[3] Bouchart,[4] and Brésin[5] concur in placing the death on 'Kalendis Januarii' or on 'le premier jour de janvier'; and that date is also given by Jean Damien, Prior of Saint-Maximin, whose 'Register' has been published by J. H. Albanès in the *Revue des Sociétés savantes des Départements*.[6]

'Il Re di Francia', wrote Guicciardini,[7] 'parti quasi repentinamente della vita presente, avendo fatto memorabile il primo dì dell' anno mille cinquecento quindici con la sua morte'; and Peter Martyr wrote: 'In Calendis Januarii emisit Ludovicus Christianissimus Gallorum Rex animam illam.'[8]

rendit son esperit à Dieu le lundy premier jour du moys de janvier, lan dessusdit mil V cens et xiiii.'

[1] Nicole Gilles, *Les Annales et Chroniques de France*, ed. Denis Sauvage, 1562, vol. ii, fo. cxxxvii. His reference to the death is identical with that of Bouchet in *Les Annales d'Aquitaine*, cited above, p. 269, note.

[2] J. de Bourdigné, *Chroniques d'Anjou et du Maine* (Angers, 1842), vol. ii, pp. 305–6: 'De griefve et incurable maladie détenu, le premier jour de janvier mil cccc quatorze, son royal corps de son très vertueux esprit fut habandonné, qui fut ung jour fort désordonné et énormal pour la saison, car en divers lieux du royaulme, et mesmes ou [au] pays d'Anjou fist les plus merveilleux ventz que l'on eust mémoire avoir esté. Et davantage furent veuz au ciel esclayrs et choruscations, et ouyz si grans tonnoirres et orages que l'on pensoit que le monde deust finir. Et furent par iceulx ventz et tempestes plusieurs arbres déracinez et abatuz.'

'Au temps de Bourdigné', comments his editor, 'l'on était encore sous l'influence de cette idée, qu'il n'arrivait aucun événement qu'il ne fut accompagné de signes étranges au ciel et sur la terre.' It would seem, however, that Bourdigné's reference to 'ventz, tonnoirres et orages' was not founded merely upon superstition, for Fleuranges also declared that the day of the death was marked by 'le plus horrible temps que jamais on veit', and Pasqualigo, the ambassador journeying to France, wrote that he had left Sarzana on 2nd January and had travelled 'per quella asperima Riviera con tanta pioza che pareva el deluvio' (Sanuto, *I Diarii*, vol. xix, col. 382).

[3] Françoys de Belleforest in his continuation of N. Gilles follows the account given by that author, adding that Louis died 'à Paris en son hostel des Tournelles en la rue S. Antoine': edit. of 1573, p. 440.

[4] Alain Bouchart, *Les Grandes Croniques de Bretaigne*, ed. H. Le Meignen, 1886, fo. 280, is identical with Pierre Desrey, as cited above.

[5] L. Brésin, *Chroniques de Flandre et d'Artois*, ed. E. Mannier, 1880, p. 93: 'Ledit sieur roy estant assez sur eage, comme de LV ans, et fort tourmenté dès longtemps paravant de douleurs de nerfz, tomba en fièvres après qu'il se fut trop intempérament permis beaucoup de choses en la compaignie de la jeune dame, au moien de quoy mourut d'un flux de ventre, quy luy survint le premier jour de janvier.'

[6] Series VII, vol. ii, p. 213: 'Anno Domini 1515, et prima januarii, obiit Ludovicus XII, Francorum rex.'

[7] *Storia d'Italia*, ed. A. Gherardi, vol. iii, p. 106.

[8] *Opus Epistolarum*, edit. of 1670, p. 300.

Lastly, Holinshed records that 'the French King died at the citie of Paris, the first daie of Januarie, when he had beene married to the faire ladie Marie of England foure score and two daies'.[1]

The reader is now in possession of all the materials upon which to base his judgement in considering the little problem which erudition has raised concerning the date of Louis XII's death. For my own part, I think that the solution hinges upon the interpretation of Dandolo's dispatch. If Dandolo knew on the morning of the 1st that the King was dead, then, since the death undoubtedly occurred in the evening, Louis must have died on the previous day, 31st December. I have given my reasons for thinking that it was really at about 10 p.m. on the 1st that Dandolo took up his pen to say that the King was dead. If so, there is no discrepancy between his testimony and the bulk of the French evidence, and there is no longer any good reason why that evidence should be challenged, for apart from Dandolo the evidence in favour of 31st December is slight. Of the four writers who assign the death to that day one, Bouchet, is careless about dates, and in this case contradicts himself, giving one date in one book and the other elsewhere; Prato, an Italian, is at variance with his eminent compatriot, Guicciardini; Badoer's statement, based upon the first report to reach London, was disputed by Sanuto, who recorded it; and the fourth, Le Doyen, is of small account. My conclusion therefore is that the traditional view is correct, and that Louis XII died on 1st January 1515.

[1] *Chronicles*, vol. iii, p. 610.

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